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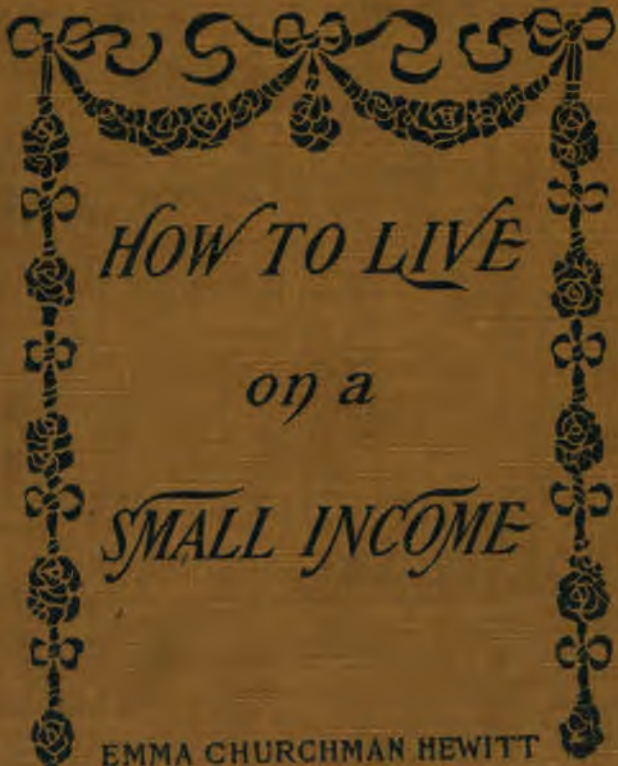
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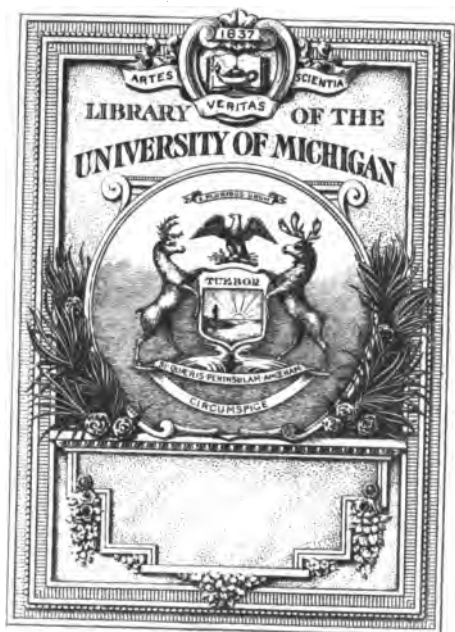
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HOW TO LIVE

on a

SMALL INCOME

EMMA CHURCHMAN HEWITT



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To
*every young housekeeper who finds
it helps her in her daily struggle
with household problems, this
little volume is cordially inscribed*

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Foreword

It would be useless in a work of this kind (or, indeed, in any work that one hopes to make of permanent value to the young housekeeper) to deal in statistics. These vary so with time, conditions and locality, that what may be perfectly true to-day will probably to-morrow possess no value.

Therefore, the only plan that can be pursued, is to try to open up such a train of ideas as will lead the young housekeeper to *think for herself*, and best to adjust herself to her environments.

For only by this means, only by regarding her life not as a "daily grind" but as a mission to which she must give herself in no half-hearted way, only by keeping eyes and ears open and brain receptive to new and improved ideas, can she accomplish that most satisfactory of all things—obtain for herself and those dear to her a maximum of comfort and happiness for a minimum of expense.

Another thought! *Housekeeping* and *home-making* go hand in hand. No woman who makes her home subservient to her house, is a good housekeeper in the highest and best sense of the word. The woman who obliges her husband and sons to come in the back way, take off their shoes and don a pair of slippers, ready at hand, before they enter (an actual case) for fear they may bring in some particles of dust, is not a good housekeeper, though her house be spotless. No woman who, for fear that things may be upset, obliges her children to play in the street or seek amusement in the homes of companions with less particular mothers, is a good housekeeper. No woman who makes of her house such a god that her husband must go to the club for want of a comfortable home in which to spend his evenings, is a good housekeeper.

Though her pantry shelves be filled with perfect jellies, and her cupboards be immaculate; though her kitchen table be white as snow and no speck of dust be found anywhere; though every scrap be saved and the bank account have been swelled through her thrift, she is not a good housekeeper—she is a drudge.

Such a woman shields herself, with severe dig-

nity, behind the saying that cleanliness is next to godliness. But she forgets *on which side of godliness* it should be placed. "*Next* to," yes! but on the *hither* side, not *beyond*.

The woman spoken of in Proverbs, whose "children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her,"—she it is who has reached the truly sublime heights.

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How to Live on a Small Income

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE great mistake that is frequently, nay, *generally*, made by those who are obliged for their own sakes to study closely household economies, is to confound the true meanings of the two words "cheap" and "inexpensive." They are by no means interchangeable, though very apt to be so regarded. A "cheap" article or arrangement may prove, in the end, most expensive. And one of the most vexing problems of life is to study matters with such judgment that one will be able to decide wisely as to what really *cannot* and what really *must* be afforded.

Even amusements and recreation cannot be lightly put aside, lest this very self-abnegation engender ills, the correction of which far exceeds in expense that which would have been required

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for the first indulgence. Variety is a vital necessity for the human body and human mind. To starve either in this respect, is to do it an injury, sometimes irreparable. And though by denying oneself, one may be able to point proudly to a slowly swelling bank account, one cannot be said to have *lived* meanwhile ; one has merely existed.

“No, I never take a holiday,” says *Pater Familias*, virtuously. “It costs too much. Of course, I wouldn’t want to go unless I took mother and the children, so none of us go, and the little money I *could* spare for a trip, we put in bank.” And then he adds with a sigh, “Dear knows, it’s needed there with all the sicknesses we have had !”

And it never seems to occur to him that the expenditure of the money on something pleasant, might have gone very far toward building the family up to battle against disease and thus avoid being obliged to put it into nauseous doses and doctor’s bills.

“This sounds well,” sneers *Pater Familias*, “but if you’d step into my house, you’d see how far a ten dollar bill would go toward making a vacation trip for the crowd.”

Ten dollars! why, that is a *fortune* if properly spent! Let me tell you what one girl did (and many more have done the same thing). She put into a box from time to time a few pennies (she was too poor for more) and when summer came and she had her vacation, did she sit down and discontentedly say that she wasn't going away because she couldn't afford it?

Not a bit of it! She calculated her resources, and that slender purse, that had gathered a few pennies at a time, took her mother and her little brother on trolley trips away from city sights and sounds into the fresh pure air and green fields and shady, fragrant woods, from which they came home at night, tired with a healthy tire, but refreshed. For her few dollars, she had one good week of "vacation," with another at home doing around the house the things in which her soul delighted, but for which, ordinarily, she had no time. Think what luxury her few hard earned and still more hard saved pennies purchased for her and her mother and brother! The vacation was truly *inexpensive* but by no means *cheap*.

Think what *you* could do with the little money, the sum you think so paltry! You can't spare

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the time? Then divide it up. Take a day each week. If that is too much, take an afternoon each week, and abandon yourself to the delights of some inexpensive trips. Change of scene, change of environment, new sights, new sounds, these are what we all need. If we can obtain them for a few pennies by all means let us have them and not grudge the money.

Another place where one should be very wary of saving money, is on the table. The writer has known women who boasted of the marvelous "cheapness" with which they catered for the family, whose half-starved children would go to the neighbors' houses and ask for something to eat. The anemic, weak children mutely testified to the *inexpensiveness* of the diet upon which they were being fed, but it was by no means "cheap" in the end. Surely, good milk is more palatable than cod-liver oil, and fresh fruits than Epsom salts! What cruelty to make our children live upon such food that by very force of the diet, nauseous doses are necessary to "build up" the abused body! How *more* than short-sighted is this!

Even so-called luxuries are often a necessity to make up some waste in the human system. For

instance, there are many times when lemonade is not only craved by the palate but by the system itself. There are times when sweets are a necessity—when some failure in the secretions can only be supplied by a liberal allowance of saccharine substances.

All this does not counsel waste or extravagance. On the contrary, it is merely meant to illustrate the possibility of taking care of the health in the simplest and most efficacious manner. The remarks have nothing to do with the general table.

Too great stress cannot be laid upon the refraining from buying table luxuries and fancy foods, as being an absolute necessity for those housekeepers who would truly economize. A little here, a little there, and all “*so good*”! It does not seem much at the moment, but a careful examination of itemized accounts will often show a “leak” that only the housekeeper can stop. It has been the rock more than once upon which the household barque has foundered.

The habit, which insensibly increases, frequently arises from sheer indolence. The housekeeper is not willing to take the time or trouble to study ways of preparing appetizing food at a small cost. So, if she wants something “specially

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good," instead of applying herself to her cook-book, and her resources at hand, off she goes to the shops and buys articles for which she really has not the money without skimping somewhere, and even if she had, the article would be an extravagance for one in her circumstances.

Let the food be inexpensive in the true sense of the word; let study show where the best value may be obtained for the least money; let study also teach the difference of food values in regard to nutritive properties (the most inexpensive are often the richest in nutrition) but by all means let there be plenty and well prepared. Make the table as inexpensive as you can, but always with an eye to the health of the family. For the true art of living on small means consists, not in squeezing the allowance for the table or insufficient clothing of the children in order that the bank account may give a good showing, but in getting the very best out of life in every way for the money expended.

CHAPTER II

SELECTING A HOME

OF all the ambitions held in common by the newly married couple, that of owning their own home is probably the greatest. And those who are able to start out in life thus equipped are regarded by most of their friends as specially fortunate. If the young people be well provided otherwise with this world's goods, so that they may do as they choose in all respects, the idea possesses not only great charm but great value. But under the circumstances which guide the average home-maker, and which must be considered in such a volume as this, the wisdom of such a move is open to doubt (as has been borne out by hundreds of instances) and the purchase of a home should be consummated only after the most serious deliberation, weighing well the pros and cons on both sides.

To begin, let the young couple consider the advantages of owning their own home. These need be sketched but briefly as they are generally quite apparent.

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In the first place, such a course gives a distinct sense of possession and a pride in the fact that urges both husband and wife to do all they can to improve the property. Many a change is made, either for the sake of beauty or convenience, of which they never would have thought in connection with a rented property.

In the second place, where the husband has not a sufficient amount saved to purchase the home outright, and it is taken subject to a mortgage, the desire to pay off the mortgage and have the property clear is such an incentive to saving, upon the part of both husband and wife, as nothing else could be. It is a direct road to economy and thrift even where these qualities have previously been lacking.

The third consideration may seem to some a purely sentimental one, yet sentiment has a great influence in the lives of all, unsuspected though it be, in many cases; when children are born and grow to manhood and womanhood in the home which has sheltered their parents since marriage, they are likely to have such an attachment for the old homestead that it will serve as an anchor to hold them steadfast through all the storms of life. This is specially true of the home in the country,

where every tree, every rock, and every foot of sod may have some pleasant association, or may hold some childish memory. Such attachments are not to be lightly cast aside.

As a fourth argument, may be urged the provision of a home for wife and children in case of the illness or death of the husband or father. This, of course, is a consideration of value only when the property is entirely free of debt. It does away with what has been a horror to so many unhappy women—the monthly rent. To be sure there are taxes to be paid, and other expenses to be met, but these are not of monthly recurrence and there is more time to provide for them. Of course, had sufficient money been saved for the purchase of a house, but instead had been used for some good investment yielding a fair interest, the wife would have this to use, and would, perhaps, find it more advantageous than the owning of a property. But if in addition to the home which the husband and father has been able to leave his family, he has also been able to leave even a small life insurance, so much the better off are those for whom he can no longer personally provide. A life insurance is money in hand at once when most needed.

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Now let us consider the *disadvantages* of owning property, for there are certain drawbacks connected with this privilege, which the enthusiastic, in their desire to have a home of their own, are apt to overlook.

In the first place, at the average age at which men marry, their business prospects, while they may be excellent, are by no means sure. Their very advancement along their own lines, may involve many changes. This is one of the risks which the newly married are willing to take when they set out together in life. If the husband be a man of worth, there is little doubt that he will always be able to find an acceptable berth somewhere, should his present position fail him, but where? That is the question. His employers, too, may change their plans at any moment and shift his services to another city where they have allied interests. Two instances in point may be cited. One young woman, married about six years, had lived in four different cities. Her sister, marrying a man employed by the same firm, in ten years had moved three times. Each husband must make his household arrangements to suit his work. To have been hampered by owning their house, would have

added many complications to an already complex situation. A man was overheard not long ago to remark : " I've been married ten years and have built three different houses. I no sooner got them completed when the firm sent me to another city. In fact, my last one wasn't finished when I had to gather up my family and go out to Cincinnati for three years, and now I am back again in my own old city."

Under such circumstances as these, what is the situation ? The young couple must either sell their property or rent it. At a hurried or forced sale, almost nothing is realized ; and renting houses through an agent, in another city, is never satisfactory. In any event, there is sure to be considerable loss of money involved at a time when the young couple can least afford it.

In the second place, a property that seems desirable during the first stage of married life, in a few years becomes entirely inadequate. The dwelling that was "so cute," and "just the thing," for two, is more than a close fit for four or five ; and then what to do is the burning question. Rex's den, which seemed an absolute necessity at first, has long ago been turned into a nursery ; and Regina sighs for closet room.

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There is no space for an annex, and to add a floor, is to add steps that Regina is not willing to take. The plumbing is no longer of the newest, the house needs paint and paper from top to bottom and there is a suspicion of leak in the roof. The correction of these ills means the expenditure of a considerable sum, a thing not to be thought of at the time. The changes must wait till money is not quite so tight, and the property grows shabbier and shabbier, and the family more and more crowded till despair fills their souls and they try to sell.

If good fortune comes to them, and a railway or a street must be cut through, under the "homestead law" they may be able to claim from two to three times what was paid for the property, and may go on their way rejoicing. As the homestead law, however, comes to the rescue of about one householder out of a thousand, the prospect of selling at a good figure is very remote. The other nine hundred and ninety-nine have trouble untold in disposing of their property. Ask some one who has tried, if you wish to know the ordinary difficulties of the situation.

The third point is that of *environment*. By a

change of surroundings many a property has, in a few years, been utterly ruined as a residence. Absolutely desirable in every way when purchased, specially so on account of a fine open view, a foundry erected opposite with its following of small dwellings suitable but for foundry employees, has not only spoiled the prospect, and made the neighborhood most undesirable as a residential section, but has utterly ruined all chances of disposing of the comfortable dwelling,—unless, indeed, the ground should happen to be wanted for commercial purposes. If this be the case, the purchaser will offer only the lowest possible price, feeling sure that this will be eventually accepted by the owner who will be forced to leave the neighborhood in disgust and who will, at last, be glad to take almost any price for a property which is depreciating in value every day. The wisest thing, therefore, is to sell if possible the moment conditions seem to promise a change for the worse, if a reasonable price be offered, and not to cling to the property for sentimental reasons or in the hope of obtaining more money.

Further than all this, there is the consideration of taxes, water-rates, assessment for new

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curbing, and a dozen more contingencies which the young and enthusiastic fail to take into account.

Of course, if the young couple settle in the country—the real country, not simply the suburbs—many of these objections do not hold good, but the questions of probable change of occupation on the part of the husband, and of possible inadequacy in the size of the house, should be carefully pondered.

All these things carefully considered, it would seem to the author that if a man has the money for the purchase of a home, it would be well to buy with it some good bonds, the interest on which could be applied to the *rent* of a house from which the family can move at any time when it no longer meets their needs. There is in such an arrangement, just as much financial benefit and none of the unavoidable responsibilities.

However, if it has been decided to purchase a house, the most serious thought should be put upon the selection; location and convenience should be studied with an eye to future developments rather than to immediate needs.

Above all should be carefully considered the

sanitary conditions of the location and environments. The condition of the dwelling itself may, of course, be overcome by the expenditure of money, but it will be difficult to persuade some one else to spend money for your benefit. The owner of a pestilential, disease-breeding pool at the foot of your property, is not going to expend one cent in removing it because you regard it as baleful. Therefore, the immediate surroundings are, from a sanitary point of view, of the utmost importance. Sanitary conditions and sanitation will be treated of in a separate chapter as the subject is one of too much importance to be passed over lightly.

Now let us suppose that the idea of purchasing a home has been put aside, and that Rex and Regina are about to rent one. What shall they take into consideration to guide them in their choice ?

The first thing, of course, is the amount of rent that they can afford to pay. It is not for any one person to dictate to another a specified price per month, but careful calculation has led the experienced to say that one-fourth the income should be the limit expended for rent. If kept within this proportion, other expenses will adjust

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themselves. The smaller the house, the less the proportion of everything; less heat, less light, less work, less appearance.

The last item may seem to be one of minor consideration, but for the sake of one's children and their future, a certain tax must be paid to convention, though the last thing to be advised would be a strain to keep up appearances. To live in a forty-dollar-per-month neighborhood, one must live, modestly and quietly though it be, in a forty-dollar-per-month fashion. Should a woman wish to sit on her front door-step with her sleeves rolled up, she should move to a locality where such practices are the order of the day. To illustrate by an incident from life, a young mother in one of the better locations kept her children in dresses that made them look like the inmates of a charity school. When remonstrated with, her plea was that it made less washing, which was doubtless true. But every other child in the neighborhood was clothed in neat, pretty garments, not necessarily expensive but tasteful; and it was the inherent right of *her* children not to be made conspicuous in their dress. Had she felt the necessity of clothing them in this unusual fashion, then she should

have moved into a location where such clothing would not be conspicuous.

A second consideration is the class of people occupying the other residences.

"Oh!" says Regina, contemptuously, "I care nothing about the neighbors. I keep to myself and have my own friends. The people that live next door, or opposite, don't enter into my mind at all."

That sounds well, Regina, but in time of trouble you may be glad enough to call upon some kindly neighbor for assistance. And further, when you talk that way, you are voicing a very wrong principle. If you are living in a community, be it state, city or country, you are an integral part of that community, and as such, you have certain obligations that no one may shirk without failing to discharge his full duty to the world and his fellow man.

Another consideration, when your children grow old enough to need companionship outside of their own home, as they will and should (and that, early in life) will they find their needs supplied by the children of your own old friends who live in an entirely different section of the city, and with whom they probably do not come

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in contact with more than twice a year? And who, it may be added, are probably forming new ties and are drifting further and further away from old friendships, all the time.

You owe it to each other and to your children to try to collect around you, no matter where you settle, a pleasant little circle of acquaintances. You need not make intimate friends of any of them, but acquaintances you should have. It certainly helps to keep one's nature sweet; it helps to broaden one's outlook and to keep one from being selfish; it helps to make one a better citizen to have across the street and a few doors away neighbors with whom one can exchange a few pleasant words, or whom one can help out of some little difficulty. Nothing can be more narrowing than keeping one's interests entirely within one's own home and family circle.

Above all, Rex and Regina, you owe it to your children that you should have an immediate circle of acquaintances among whose young people your own young people may find suitable companions; children who are brought up without contact with outside playmates, no matter how many of the immediate family there may be, become clannish and narrow, and, frequently, priggish and selfish.

Believe it or not, every one needs companionship outside of his own family, and children will find it, no matter how many precepts are laid down. How necessary, then, that the parents should be personally and pleasantly acquainted with the other parents in the neighborhood. How else can they judge fairly of the kind of play-mates their children are coming in contact with?

Further, when these same children have grown to their teens and are beginning to entertain and be entertained, how wise will Rex and Regina have been to have gradually formed a circle for them where parents and children shall share amusements; where fathers will take their sons fishing; and mothers will smilingly help their daughters to get up a lunch party.

But! what has all this to do with living on a small income? some one may ask. A great deal; for, what has already been said, he lives best, who, in the broadest sense, gets the most out of life for himself and his family for the money expended. The writer knows one family living on \$800 a year, that not only lives as well materially, but has a broader, fuller, happier life than many with twice that income.

This kind of thing it is that lifts life to a

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higher plane than that of mere sordid existence or the following of selfish pursuits. It is *living*.

Before closing this chapter, it may not be amiss to suggest to those who are about to select a home, the value of turning their thoughts toward the country,—either the real country or the outskirts of some suburban town—where good value for one's dollar may be found in real estate; where one's children may be brought up in the free air and God-given sunshine; where simplicity is the rule, and neighbor does not strive with neighbor for appearance. It seems as if one of the inalienable rights of our children should be the health and strength and enjoyment that only the free life of the country can give. And with our trolleys, our good train service, our free rural delivery of mails and our telephone service, living in the country to-day interferes very little with the usual advantages of life or the interests of the business man. As for the education of the children, that is well provided for by our excellent system of schools, which forms a network all over the country.

As a money proposition, living in the country should appeal to those with a small income; for even if one does not buy, where can one rent as

cheaply for the accommodations? For less than half the money that would be needed in the city, to house one's family, a comfortable home in the country may be found, attached to which will be sufficient ground to raise much that is required for the table.

"But," it may be urged, "do not the necessary commutation tickets for those living in the suburbs who must come into town every day almost balance the difference in rent?"

Not necessarily, by any means, for even here judgment may be exercised. A place must be selected where the commutation is commensurate with the income.

Of course for those living out in the rural districts, where the husband has his farm or has some other occupation close at hand, the question of commutation need not be considered. And it may be added that this man, while a hard worker and missing some of the advantages of city life, is surely more independent and frequently more care-free and happier than the majority of his brothers. Being away from the large centres, where the desire to emulate one's neighbors seems so intense, he has also a better opportunity for saving money.

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When it comes to the housemother of a country home, there are not nearly so many temptations to petty extravagances in her infrequent trips to the city as when she can "run down-town" any time and every day if it please her. The children, too, do not have the same opportunity for acquiring extravagant habits and fictitious wants. What they do not see, they know nothing about and do not long for.

CHAPTER III

HEALTH PROBLEMS AND SANITATION

"HEALTH problems!" exclaims some one; "what do 'health problems' have to do with living on a small income?"

Much, very much, as, if you think, you will be able to draw your own deductions. If nothing else offers by way of example, open your ears to the conversations around you as you ride in the street cars or in the train. What do you hear? "Oh, yes! all the children have been sick this winter. Nellie started with a bad cold and it went through the whole family. I'm almost afraid to see the doctor's bill." "My husband has just had a bad case of grip. We had to have a trained nurse for two weeks. I can tell you I felt badly to see that fifty dollars go in nursing, when we needed it so for other things. No new coats for anybody *this* winter, I guess. But it's all right. I couldn't have nursed the case myself and kept on my feet. It was better to have a nurse for two weeks than for six. *And* the doc-

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tor's bill, my dear! Not that he charged a cent too much for all he did, poor man, but it comes hard on *us*, just the same."

And so it goes. First one member of the family and then another, and no proper precautions taken to avoid the trouble, the suffering and the necessarily attendant expense. Instead of isolating the patient, although it has been clearly demonstrated that ordinary colds are "catching," it is at once assumed that "it will go through the family, of course," and expense for medicine and (if matters become serious) for physician's visits, is multiplied by the number of the family, whereas a little care might have stopped the affair at the first case. Is health, then, not to be considered in itemizing family expenses?

The source and kind of the milk supply—the source and kind of the water supply—the condition of the refrigerator—the care of the bottles or cans in which the milk is kept—the kind and condition of the food stuffs—their manner of preparation for consumption—all these and more are in the province of the housekeeper when she is trying to keep down expenses.

And not to be lightly regarded, are the fool-

hardy feats against which children should be warned. The boy who jumped from the second-floor roof on "a dare," not only met with a prompt and proper punishment in the pain he suffered from a broken leg, but he added materially to the expenses of the year. A boy need not be a "muff" or a coward because he has too much sense and consideration to risk life or limb by some foolish performance. If you will look around on the families who are subject to so-called "accidents," it will nearly always be shown that they are the result of some daring or careless act which has done no one any good and has worked harm to one or more. Says some one apropos of this, "There never yet was an 'accident' on a railway. Such calamities are always the result of a dereliction from duty upon the part of *some* one."

Therefore, as health seems to be one of the prime factors in a well regulated home, one of the first things to be examined into before residence has been taken up in the new house, is the condition of its sanitation.

It certainly seems strange that while sanitation is a subject that so greatly agitates the public mind, there is so comparatively little interest

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displayed in it by the individual. There is a carelessness, upon the part of parents especially, which one finds it difficult to understand when one reflects upon the gravity of the issue.

Is the drainage good? Are the drains themselves in good condition? Are the pipes properly trapped? Is there enough window space to give proper ventilation for the cubic contents of the rooms? Whence is that ventilation derived? Does the air blow over rotting garbage heaps, or foul pools, or is it as pure as it is possible to have it? Have the walls been scraped before fresh paper was applied or are the family to breathe the germs thrown off from a half dozen layers of soiled papers which have been on for years, and which have absorbed all sorts of undesirable exhalations from the people who have occupied these rooms before? Is the cellar in good condition, with no leaks from drainage or supply-pipes? Are the gas-pipes in good order? Is the yard damp and unfit for the children to play in?

These questions and a score more should the parents put to themselves before they settle in a new residence even though the neighborhood be all that is desirable. And upon the answers

should depend final action. If the answer to any single one is contrary to sanitary conditions and the defect cannot be remedied at once, all thought of that special house should be put aside, no matter how alluring everything else may be. Should the father feel himself incapable of judging in detail, it will be money in his pocket to employ some one, outside of the agent, to bring him a true report of the condition of the premises.

One of the frequent and least suspected sources of ill health in a family is the paper on the walls. Not because of arsenical coloring matter but because of the many layers which have been imposed one upon the other.

It is a well-known medical fact that the germs of diphtheria will lie dormant for more than a year and then work out from an under layer of paper to do damage possibly that no mere money can repair. An instance of this, taken from life, may be cited right here. A residence in a certain locality became known as the "diphtheria house" because of the fact that just as soon as it became occupied, there developed a case of diphtheria within a prescribed period. After each infection the premises were thoroughly fumigated, but still

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the trouble went on until its evil reputation was established. Finally, through some difficulty, a new tenant, ignorant however of the evil reputation of the house, scraped the walls of the room in which the case of diphtheria had developed. Upon the walls were found *five layers of paper*. Each time a case of diphtheria had occurred, the room was thoroughly fumigated, and a *fresh layer of paper put on*. A fine harbor for the deadly germs truly. They did not appear at once because they were obliged to work their way out through the new paper.

Fumigation is an absolutely necessary remedial agent as it reaches the cracks in the woodwork as nothing else will do. But it will not remedy everything (or it *may* not), and the only safe precaution is to have the paper removed. Then with fumigation, paint well cleaned with an anti-septic solution and fresh paper, the room may be again regarded as sanitary.

Even if there may have been no known contagious or infectious disease in the house one wishes to rent or buy, it is well to have all papers removed no matter how clean the old ones may be, unless, indeed, it has never yet been lived in. It is an easy matter to tell how many layers of

paper there are on the wall by examining a given space (the width of a breadth of paper), and counting the seams found. One cannot always detect these seams by the eye, but running a finger along the wall is sure to reveal their presence. In imposing a new paper upon an old one, the hangers bring the seams in a new place. So for every seam there is soiled paper underneath. The agent will sometimes try to make the tenant believe that there is no other paper below, but let the latter judge for himself.

Running water in the rooms, while a great convenience, it is to be admitted, is a menace to health. With the greatest care in the world, one cannot answer for the stability of a trap. It is liable to become out of order at any minute. Where there is room for accident, there is room for the insidious intrusion of sewer-gas. The only sure way to avoid all possibility of absorbing this poison during sleep, at which time the body offers the least resistance to the encroachment of disease, is to do away with the running water.

It is wise even to have no private entrance between the bedroom and the bath, unless there can be a little hallway, or at least a double door be-

tween. Even the nursery, which is occupied generally only in the daytime, should have no direct communication with the bath room.

And speaking of the nursery, there is too little importance attached to its location. The size of it does not matter so much, but of all things, it should be sunny; and the higher up, the better. A New York mother without a servant one winter, kept her children with her during her work hours, giving them the run of the basement, dining-room, and kitchen. Much to the distress of the family, some one of the three children were sick during the entire winter, colds, diphtheria, pneumonia, and general illness of which no one, the doctor included, seemed to be able to divine the origin.

Finally said the physician, "These children must come out of that basement. Clear out a sunny room on the third floor, hedge them around so nothing can happen to them, and turn them loose. Let them take care of each other." Result—gradual restoration to health and no serious damage done by lack of constant motherly oversight.

Where shall we begin to examine the proposed home? Which is the most important point?

Well—where all is so important, it is difficult

to claim for any one spot a precedence over the rest. Possibly the so-called "parlor" is the least important because the least used ; but of the rest of the house there is little choice. So suppose we begin with the cellar as the lowest point.

To be at its best, a cellar should be dry, well cemented, and comparatively light, and should contain a dark closet. These qualifications, however, are not always obtainable. So it remains with the housekeeper to create her own sanitary conditions.

The walls of every cellar should be whitewashed not less than once a year and twice would be better. Lime is a wonderful sweetener and germ destroyer. The windows should be kept open as much as possible consistent with keeping out rain and dampness, and a current of air allowed to play through all the time. The floor should be kept well swept and the refuse should be thrown out at once so as to allow no lurking-places for disease. If the floor be cemented sweeping will be all that is required, but if of simple earth, a liberal sprinkling of powdered lime will be found beneficial. But do not for a moment flatter yourself that an efficacious battle with disease is being made by setting around saucers containing

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chloride of lime. The trouble might as well be saved for all the good it does.

If an odor, however faint, or an extra dampness appears in the cellar, drop everything at once and search for the cause. Many things may have happened. The soil-pipe may have developed a leak—a dead animal may be creating the trouble—an undesirable connection may have been opened up with a neighbor's premises. Whatever the trouble, it cannot be remedied too quickly. Remember that any unpleasant odor is not confined to the cellar, for in a dozen different ways, of which the registers, winter and summer, are not the least important, this unsanitary air is disseminated over the entire dwelling.

One of the points which it is most difficult to impress on the average housekeeper is that a littered cellar may be absolutely innocuous, while one in which extreme cleanliness is the rule and yet which contains a neat little pile of decayed vegetation, is a menace to health. It is better to have one's cellar knee-deep in untidiness than to allow one piece of decayed vegetable matter to remain in it over night.

So much for the cellar. Next we reach the kitchen. The sanitation of this department lies

in three considerations—the gas supply, the water supply and the arrangements for waste. If one may commit suicide by turning on the gas in a closed room, think how far from healthful it must be to breathe constantly the air from a leaky gas-jet, even though the atmosphere is changing. The moment one “smells gas,” that moment one is *breathing* gas. So every jet should be made perfectly tight, not only in this room but all over the house.

If the water-pipes leak anywhere, they cause rotting wood and make a constant dampness. In time, mould accumulates and a most undesirable condition of affairs follows. Enclosed plumbing, which is happily being done away with gradually but which still exists in older residences, should be examined not less than once a week so that no leak may gain headway.

The waste-pipes should never be allowed to be clogged in any way, and to prevent grease collecting, the pipes should be thoroughly cleansed every day. *But do not use lye*, unless you wish disaster to follow. It was once considered quite proper to pour down the drain lye diluted with boiling water. It has been demonstrated, however, that the chemical change which takes place

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outside the pipes when grease and lye come in contact, takes place just the same within the pipes. And if lye is poured down the drain-pipe *soap* is formed, which will probably become a hard cork, so that nothing short of plumber's work will remove it. In fact, very often there is nothing to be done but to cut the pipe, remove the soap plug and solder it up again. All of which is an expense, a waste of time, and an annoyance.

To cleanse a drain, boiling water in which washing-soda has been dissolved, is one of the best things. It eats the grease and carries it along with it. A tablespoonful of clear household ammonia put down the kitchen sink at night, so that it may remain in the trap till morning, is not only an excellent cleanser but a good disinfectant.

That which has been said of the kitchen, applies almost equally well to the bath-room except that as we do not meet there with the grease found in the kitchen, the cleansing process need not be quite so strenuous. Once a week, however, or even twice, soda and ammonia should be used to flush the drains. Scrupulous care should be exercised as to leaks; and the traps should often be examined to see that nothing is wrong.

If the housemother will realize the responsibility of all this as resting mainly on her own shoulders she will not only grow alert but keen. Not long ago a faint odor like a musty broom began to be noticed in a bath room. Everything was examined but no trace of anything could be found. The mother, however, was uneasy and was not willing to lay it to imagination. "If," she argued, "it is hidden somewhere, then boards are rotting and shortly the floors and ceilings will begin to show the effect." So she prowled around and lynx-eyed peered here and felt there till way behind in a hidden corner she discovered a loose rubber joint in a supply-pipe from which water was dripping more or less rapidly. The floor was soaked and in a little while, but for her determination and energy, the dining-room ceiling would have been ruined.

May we stop right here to suggest that it behooves every woman, whether living on a small or a larger income, to learn all she can about the ways of mechanics and what good plumbing, etc., requires. It will not take an intelligent woman long to acquaint herself with these things, and the satisfaction she will derive from seeing that things are done right, will pay in itself, to say

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nothing of the saving of expense. For plumbing, etc., done by incompetent workmen, must always be done again shortly, and be paid for twice.

Two instances may illustrate. In one case a leak appeared in the ceiling of a dining-room. The plumber came, tightened a screw, gave his opinion, and sent in his bill. The spot not drying out as it should have done, the plumber was again notified, came again, fiddled a little while at something else, gave his opinion, and again sent in his bill. The leak still not drying, the housemother became exasperated and when he came a third time *she* gave *her* opinion.

"Where did you say *you* thought it was?" demanded the plumber sullenly, not to say contemptuously.

"I believe it to be a leak in the supply-pipe under the floor, right here."

"Why, if I look at *that*," exclaimed he in disgust, "I'll have to take up some of the floor!"

"Well, go on, take the floor up," replied she serenely. "You're here to find the leak."

She stayed right there while the floor was being torn up and behold! the supply-pipe was running a stream as thick as a small straw! It is needless to say that the disgust and contempt

of the plumber were in no degree lessened by his discovery.

Again, a furnace giving out gas in an especial room, was examined by various furnace men, each tinkering a little, giving his opinion and sending in a bill, but it remained for the housekeeper to discover that the hot air chamber was rotted out, and therefore got all the gas from the smoke-pipe.

Workmen hate to be watched by the women of a household, and it is quite possible for a woman to make herself perfectly obnoxious. But it is not necessary; an intelligent woman can learn much from silently watching the mechanics at work, and she can learn more by putting her wits together and making logical deductions. When the furnace man comes she is then in position to say, "Mr. Furnaceman, I wish you to examine the heat flue. There is evidently a leak in it somewhere." Or, "Mr. Plumber, there is evidently a leak between the floor above and the ceiling of this room. That floor must come up and the leak must be found." This prevents the mechanic from tinkering a bit at something entirely irrelevant because he has been vaguely told that "there is something wrong." If a woman puts her mind to it and uses her mother wit,

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she can generally tell approximately where the trouble lies.

And by doing this, she exercises a most important economy by preventing the incompetent plumber from "fussing around" for a few hours, and then sending in a bill for time spent in doing (or leaving undone) work that must be gone over again in a few weeks at additional expense.

Most of the points touched upon, so far, pertain to houses in the city, but the same rigid care should be exercised in relation to those in the country. The dangers will possibly not be exactly the same but they will be as great, and even greater in some respects. The horror of the epidemic of typhoid fever at Plymouth, Pa., and adjacent Hamburg, are too recent to have been forgotten. And all this death and disaster the result of a "mistake" out in the open country!

All that has been said of wall-papers and cellars and drain-pipes, applies equally to country homes. So there will be no necessity to dwell upon these topics in any way. The first thing to engage the attention, should be the water-supply. Where cesspools form the only receptacle for drainage, it is considered that no well water is safe for drinking purposes, if nearer to the cesspool than

seventy feet. Some contend that one hundred feet is the only safe distance. Be this as it may, before any water has been drunk from the well, the water should be analyzed by a reputable authority and be pronounced absolutely sanitary. The *appearance* of the water is no gauge as to its healthful condition. One farmer losing cow after cow from his herd, was indignant that any one should question the condition of the water-supply. Why, the water was clear as crystal and delicious! Nevertheless, analysis proved it to be full of deadliest germs. Had the family drawn from the same well, they would all have been down with fever.

Even if the house be piped, the water should always be analyzed; and if it has been necessary to move in before this has been done, all drinking water should be boiled, as a precautionary measure.

Sometimes, too, illness has been caused by drinking water from a well, the only real fault of which was that it had stood idle while the house was vacant. After having been properly pumped out, the water was absolutely healthful. This is specially necessary where there are lead pipes. One little girl was made desperately ill

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by drinking from a source where the lead pipes were very new and had not been properly flushed.

Surface drainage is not an uncommon thing in the country, but it is by no means sanitary, and therefore the property where it is to be found, should be strictly avoided. It would be well, also, to see the spot where the cesspool is supposed to be covered. If the sod which conceals it be uneven or broken, you may be sure that there is something wrong below, and you have a right to insist on knowing what it is before you become a resident. All well-made cesspools are built in pairs, one draining into the other. This insures the first one being comparatively dry. It would be just as well to have both of these pumped out, among the precautionary measures you mean to take to insure the health of your family.

If you are taking a house with a stable yard, that, too, should be well drained. When one notes the badly drained stable yards one sees through the country, one cannot wonder at the disease which attacks the cattle. The only wonder is that there is not more mortality among the residents.

If, instead of being out in the real country where pumps are used, and cesspools the only means of drainage, the new home is to be in a suburban town, the same precautions should be observed. *Objectionable* features should be looked for, the pleasant ones will be self-evident. Otherwise, you may, when too late, find that the property has some most undesirable environment, at the back or on the side. You may discover, for instance, that just beyond your back fence, over which you have failed to look, is a public dump where your none too particular neighbors are in the habit of depositing their garbage likewise, with no city law to stop them.

The expense of moving means too much to the man with a small income for him to neglect, whether in the city or in the country, one small item of precautionary investigation.

CHAPTER IV

FLOORS AND THEIR TREATMENT

NATURALLY, in these days of enlightenment as to hygienic and prophylactic measures, one would *choose* to have hard-wood floors, well cared for, and handsome rugs. But hard-wood floors, well cared for, and handsome rugs cost money, and the thought of them is not for those of moderate means.

The next thought then, is for ordinary floors that have been prepared for staining or painting, over which rugs of a cheaper variety may be placed. Sometimes one is so fortunate as to take possession of a house where the floors are nice and even, and lend themselves to staining or painting, without preparation, but this is not often the case. There will be cracks and knot-holes, and possibly worm-holes in places which it is impossible to cover up with one's rug. What to do, is the question. Perhaps the practical experience of one such householder will be of benefit.

"Thank goodness!" exclaimed she, "at last I

haven't a carpet in my house. It was all carpeted once, but no more."

"What do you do with your floors? That is such an old house, the floors cannot be very good. Did you have new ones laid?"

"Well, I should think not! That would be a most expensive business. I make a thick flour paste, *very* thick, and fill this with old newspaper torn into little pieces till it is a pulp, no paste being seen, then I set the young people to work, with case-knives. They fill in all the cracks and knot-holes and smooth them over. These are not filled in lightly but the material is jammed in and packed tight. When it is dry, it is almost as hard as flint. It is, in fact, a species of papier-mâché and has the same effect. It takes the paint or the stain as the wood does, and whatever soaks in, paint, stain or varnish, dries and hardens again; when it is all finished and dry, I have a nice smooth floor, while my worn-out carpet has been converted into a rug either at home or at the factory. When I make them at home, I do one of two things. One way is simply to take the best of my material, match it as well as I can, turn down the ends well, and face them down with carpet binding or even an

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inch wide strip of dark chintz. If I find my rug is going to look specially nice, with a piercer I make holes just above the facing, and knot in a fringe of cotton warp which may be bought in any desired color at a small cost. Or if I am wildly extravagant, I buy enough ready-made fringe for the ends, which, by the way, is by no means expensive.

“But I never have had more satisfactory rugs for wear than those made at the factory from old ingrain carpet. There is no end to them. I never throw away a scrap of carpet of any description but save all pieces until I have the number of pounds required for my rug.”

So there is one excellent way of making floors satisfactory. After it has been subjected to this treatment, it is ready for any desired finish. Some like a painted floor, preferring to have the shade part of the general color scheme. If paint be used, it should have three or four coats of hard-wood finish, for paint, not sinking into the wood like stain, will wear off if not well protected with varnish. Two coats will probably be enough for stain.

But there may be reasons for wishing to cover one's floors entirely, even in defiance of the dic-

tates of higher hygiene. For this purpose, matting makes a nice, clean foundation for rugs in a bedroom. What is known as "filling," either of cotton or wool, which is to be found in solid body colors, is very desirable for living-rooms.

The putting down of floor coverings has much to do with the wear, especially in the case of mattings. When at all possible, the way in which most of the tread will come, is of the first consideration, and the matting should be laid so that the walking will mainly fall across the widths and with the grain. Thus, a matting in a hall, if cut in short lengths and put *across* the hall rather than with the length, will outwear three times one laid the other way. A heel that may be inclined to catch, a piece of furniture, or a trunk rolled across the grain, will probably break the threads.

Matting, as carpet, should always be well padded. It is not necessary to purchase the regular padding made for the purpose. Smooth, clean newspaper is quite as good. But if the latter be used, there should be plenty of it, and the edges should be well lapped.

If one can afford to buy matting in August or in early autumn, great bargains may sometimes

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be obtained, as the shopkeepers wish to rid themselves of all unseasonable stock.

Before we pass over mattings, let us say a word about matting rugs in summer-time. If one has a stained or painted floor, matting rugs are cool and economical, both as to money and as to work, for summer wear. Sometimes the "regular made" rugs will be found quite expensive early in the season, but it is always possible to buy odd lengths, from a yard square to two or three yards long. When these are of the fancy figured mattings, and are turned down once at the ends, with a piece of carpet binding used as a facing, they make very acceptable rugs. In mind are three in green and white, and one in red and brown and white. In each instance, the figures were in color on the white ground. The lengths were so trimmed that the figures were at a symmetrical distance from either end. Every one exclaimed over the beauty of these "rugs," never supposing for a moment that they were "home-made." They were most satisfactory in wear.

Japanese mattings, although to be found in greater variety and prettier patterns, do not wear nearly so well as the Chinese.

In buying matting, if there be an odd width left to provide for, say eighteen inches or under, it is not necessary to provide a full length and to cut off all the extra width. A half length cut in two may be so pieced that it is in no way noticeable, especially if brought under a bed, sofa or sideboard. All raw edges should be finished with carpet binding.

But many there be who do not care for matting of any kind and yet do not wish a carpet as they want to use rugs. For these, there is the filling spoken of before in either cotton or wool. While the wool is best, the wear of the cotton variety is really surprising; and it is, of course, much cheaper than the wool. It is to be found in various plain shades, notably gray, brown, dark blue and dark red. As a background for rugs, next to a handsome hard-wood floor, there is nothing better to be found.

Some people like all their floors covered with linen in summer-time. This is a delightfully cool floor covering but very expensive; next to this comes denim. There is a great deal of wear in both of these, but what is almost as good and costs much less is cotton covert. One housekeeper who says she cannot afford denim uses

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the cotton covert with equal satisfaction. Another declares that she has used it for years and "there is no wear-out to it."

Where there are many little feet to go up and down stairs, it is well to have a linen "runner" on the steps over the other covering. This may be taken up and washed as often as need be. Well starched and ironed smooth and dry, it will come from the laundry each time, "as good as new." Indeed, in summer-time it will be found both cool and economical to have such a runner on the hall as well. The summer dust grinding into the carpet, adds much to the wear and tear.

After all these, comes the regular carpet; to advise as to what one may do in relation to this, would be impossible. There is the size of the room, the use to which it is to be put, and the amount of money to be expended.

But, on general principles one may say, avoid large figures for a small room. Under any circumstances, large figures are less economical than small ones, as so much more must be cut away in the matching. And many a housekeeper has been dismayed to find that her carpet has run short by several yards, although exactly measured, because the matching required so much waste.

The rules as given by a reputable carpet dealer for measuring for a carpet are as follows:

“All carpets must be allowed six inches longer than the exact length of the room. This is required for shrinkage and hemmed ends.” (Likewise for matching. If the pattern be large, of course more must be allowed.) “For rooms of irregular shape with insets, chimneys, and bay windows, one must calculate the extreme length and breadth.”

The best rule is carefully to measure your floor space and then draw a diagram, allowing for every inset, offset and bay window. This does not need to be in exact proportion in appearance, if the figures be correct. For instance, a six-foot inset may be represented in one place by a line three inches long and in another by a line two and one-half inches, but the dealer will know, and you may rely on a reputable dealer to give you the proper amount if you show him an intelligible diagram.

The floors being prepared, the next thing for consideration is their care. In discussing that for carpets, one might begin with methods of sweeping, except that something comes before sweeping and is quite as important. Most of it

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is embodied in the words of a dear old Quaker lady who was training a young girl in housewifely arts. "Never *sweep* when thee can pick up. Thee takes some nap off the carpet every time thee sweeps, and that is wasteful and careless."

This may sound like an extremely petty economy, but it is the kind of economy which makes carpets last for years and years (as they used to do in Friends' households) instead of wearing out long before their usefulness should be over. Ordinary reasoning will prove this.

"What shall I do with these snippings?" asks the dressmaker who sees no waste-basket handy.

"Oh, just throw them on the floor. I've got to sweep here anyway."

So down they go, snippings, threads, bastings—everything—because the room must be swept anyway!

And after the dressmaker has finished her day's work, the broom is brought forth and dig, dig, dig, it goes into the carpet (no other method will loosen the threads and tiny pieces that have become impacted during the day) and the carpet is worn and the nap is taken off far beyond reason for one day's wear. Have you ever noticed

any one trying to sweep up a flat piece of paper, say an inch square? Sweep, sweep, sweep, harder, harder, harder, and still the obstinate little piece of flat paper clings. It has never been clearly demonstrated why such people do not stop for a half-second and pick up the offending particle. Such a waste of time, labor and carpet would be saved by this simple act. To-day, we do not need to "pick up" as much as we did in the days referred to in the Friend's admonition, because we have the patent sweepers.

A patent sweeper (which has been most truly described by the original name given to one by a young Southern maid, "a rolling broom") is not only a labor-saving invention in the actual sweeping, but it also saves work when one considers the dusting, and saves the furniture because so much dust does not settle. It also saves in the fact that a regular carpet sweeping is a much less frequent necessity, and that the carpet itself is treated gently.

"But," argues the neat housekeeper, "the dirt gets into the carpet and nothing but a broom will bring it out."

True! but not so much as one thinks. Look at the matter from an unbiased standpoint and

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see if one does not sweep mainly for the dirt that is on the surface.

When a day's sewing is anticipated, an old sheet, or even newspapers, spread down will save an immense amount of work and wear and tear. Each paper can be lifted or all scraps may be carefully shaken into the middle of the sheet, and there you are! No sweeping, no dust from sweeping. It is the custom of some women to keep a waste-basket beside them when sewing, and bastings and similar discarded bits are at once dropped into this receptacle. Indeed, if one is dropping things, it is quite as easy to drop them into a waste-basket as upon the floor. If one be so fortunate as to have a room devoted exclusively to sewing, or used mainly for that purpose, no better floor covering can be found than oilcloth or linoleum. Any dropped threads or snippings do not adhere to this, but can readily be brushed up with a soft broom or brush.

As to waste receptacles, they are needed in every room in the house. They make for neatness and general saving of work. And every member of the family, from *Pater Familias* down, should be trained to use them. It should be regarded as an offense to fail to do so, no

matter whether there are servants to do the picking up or not. In one household, where there were three servants and the grown daughters felt little need of helping themselves or each other, the writer saw a young girl take a letter from the hall table, and as she went up-stairs to her room distribute portions of the envelope all along the stairs as she tore it in small bits. She could be traced to her room, like Hop-o'-My-Thumb, not by pebbles but by bits of paper strewn the entire way. She didn't care for the letter and that too she crumpled and tore and threw down. What difference did it make? Eliza would pick it up. Is it any wonder that the mother of that family was in constant distress about maids? What maid would wish to stay where such utter carelessness characterized every member of the household? *

This putting down of papers is an excellent idea in the kitchen, at times. When for instance there is great preparation like baking day or preparing mince-meat or preserving, or even if frying is being done. Many a grease-spot or drop of syrup is saved from the floor covering. It is almost impossible for the most careful not to spill a little when at work.

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If one has linoleum or oilcloth in the kitchen (the former of course, if one can afford it) there should be provided for the cook, whether she be the housekeeper or a hired maid, a rug or piece of carpet to stand on. This is no question of saving the linoleum but of saving the cook. There is nothing harder on the back and nerves than standing or working on a hard floor. One housekeeper, in the early autumn, was without a maid for three weeks. She began to grow nervous and irritable beyond description; at the end of each day she was so unutterably tired that she could hardly think; her state of mind and body was a mystery to herself. She had done the same amount of work many times with half the weariness of body and soul. When the time for the maid to return was nearly at hand, the carpet man came and laid hall and dining-room carpets for the winter, the stained and polished floor having been in use all summer. A day's work under new conditions enlightened her; she had been jarring spine and nerves by constant walking on the bare floor. She then realized how hard upon the maid was the linoleum covered kitchen floor upon which she must step and stand, day in and day out. Therefore, at

once, for her own comfort as well, she placed two rugs in the kitchen. These were a yard long and could be moved to advantageous positions as desired.

Another housekeeper accomplishes the same thing by putting down an entire newspaper on which she stands while at work. "I can't afford a rug, very well, just now, so I use the papers. They are thick and soft and warm and a great comfort these winter days."

So after all, the main thing, in fact, in good housekeeping is to make the very best of the material which is at hand or which we are able to obtain. The woman who has the newspaper and does not think to use it, though she is suffering from the lack of something of the kind, is a very poor housekeeper compared to the one who saves strain and cold feet and general nervous exhaustion by making capital of the simple means at hand.

To come back to sweeping day which turns up once in so often whether one has "picked up" or not, it is a saving of the furniture (for nothing scratches it like dust) to dust every possible thing first. Each portable article should be carried out of the room, and what is nec-

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essarily left should be covered with large dust sheets.

With a whisk all the corners and the edges of the carpet should be swept out toward the centre of the room or into a dust-pan which is better. The philosophy of using the dust-pan is that it prevents the necessity of dragging this dust and dirt over the carpet. If the dust-pan is not used, when this dust has all been swept out, the sweeper should take it up. The only true way to sweep a carpet is to use both broom and sweeper or dust-pan. If, as each square yard of carpet is swept, the sweeper is used to take up the accumulation, there is no carrying of dust heaps from one end of the room to the other. Watch an ignorant sweeper and you will see her sweep, sweep, sweep an ever-increasing mass ahead of her, like a growing snowball till she at last reaches the door, when, with a grand final flirt and flourish, it is all pushed out into the hall, the rising dust settling in cracks and crevices where there never was any necessity for it to fly had it been properly taken up. The dust that was in one end of the carpet had been unnecessarily carried over the entire length of the room.

Apropos of sweeping, one housekeeper suggests the following:

To clear quickly the atmosphere of a room from dust, especially a carpeted room, after sweeping, this simple expedient suffices: Take a piece of sheeting or large towel, dip it in water and wring dry as possible, then swing the dampened cloth back and forth through the room in order to catch all the floating particles of dust. This it will do readily. Thus, within five minutes the atmosphere may be made purer and sweeter than it could be by the usual process of "dust settling" in many hours.

This is a valuable suggestion. Waiting for the dust to settle is sometimes a tedious process. By this means, it is prevented from settling on the paint and simplifies the process of dusting, as well as permits the swept room to be quickly put in order and out of the day's work.

Now let us have a few words about mattings. For sweeping them, a soft, long handled brush is best, used the way of the grain. Very often one may take up much with a sweeper. If, after it is entirely clean, the matting be washed with strong salt water, with the cloth quite damp rather than wet, the fibres will be strengthened.

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But it should be well wiped with a dry cloth after, or it will possibly be "sticky" and collect the dirt more readily than before.

Among the suggestions for the treatment of that matting which "needs something" the following seem good:

A faded white or cream-colored matting will become one color if washed with strong soda water.

If your floor matting has faded, but is not worn, give it a coat of varnish, in any desired shade of varnish stain, and it will wear longer and look fine.

Household ammonia in the water in which it is washed up, will make the matting a beautiful yellow. If this is not desired, water in which has been put a little vinegar will restore the original color. It is possibly a good thing to remember that stains made by alkalis may be restored by the application of an acid and the reverse. Lemon juice or vinegar with water, will restore an ammonia spot, and ammonia and water will restore an acid stain, generally. A bottle of ammonia was once overturned on a velvet carpet, making a bright red spot about one-half yard square. This was restored to the

original color by immediate application of vinegar and water. The same thing happening to matting, making a bright yellow stain, the color was restored in the same way.

Faded figures in a matting may be freshened by rubbing dye on with an old tooth-brush.

When this last is attempted the line of the figures should first be restored with a pencil.

This is an excellent suggestion and might have emanated from the same brain which corrected an accident to a rug. Rugs were scarce, and when she looked down at her rug with its crimson stain, of irregular shape but covering an area of at least three inches, which nothing could hide, she was almost in despair. But a bright thought came to her ; the rug being in oriental figures and the spot made by liquid stain for wood, she got down on her knees and made three more spots as nearly like the other as possible, with a camel's-hair brush, in the same relative position from the centre. So pleased was she with the result of her work, that she added some touches to the border and a few more smaller spots artistically arranged. Every one on seeing her handiwork exclaimed, " Why, when did you get your new rug ? " And the beauty of it was that, five years

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later, when the rug gave out, the added spots had faded no more than the rest had done.

A soft brush first, followed by a piece of Turkish toweling or heavy Canton flannel, is the best treatment for a varnished floor. If the cloth has been saturated with coal-oil and wrung out perfectly dry, it will be more effective, for it will give a polish as the sweeping goes on, which will render the necessity for a regular floor-polish much less frequent. Indeed, some never use anything else and their floors are always bright.

Olive oil (a low grade may be bought cheap) or boiled linseed oil mixed with vinegar in the proportion of two of the former to one of the latter, makes an excellent polish for both floors and furniture. But it must be well shaken, applied sparingly and the floor thoroughly rubbed afterward.

The following mixture is also excellent either for floors or furniture: Equal parts alcohol (wood alcohol will answer and is cheaper), turpentine, raw linseed oil, and vinegar, shaken together. Furniture that has not received a high finish, or polished surface, will be thoroughly cleaned and brightened by its application. It does not grease

or dry tacky, leaves no disagreeable odor, but simply does the business every time. Use sparingly, for the reason that the polish comes as your rag rubs dry. Finish lightly with soft cloth. A spoonful of each will enable you to test the mixture.

Oilcloth or linoleum needs a scrubbing once in a while if much used. A bland soap is required or possibly a little good washing-powder. A little coal-oil put on first, however, will loosen up so much of the dirt, that the actual cleaning will be much easier. Possibly scrubbing will not be necessary at all. A good rubbing with cold suds and a woolen cloth may do the work.

If it be possible to give the oilcloth a coat of varnish once a year, it will last almost indefinitely.

CHAPTER V

FURNISHINGS AND THEIR CARE

"Now what *you* want for a showy advertisement," said the bland and insinuating advertising solicitor, "is the picture of a pretty girl."

And his client was a manufacturer of *axe grease*!

Possibly this may seem irrelevant to the subject, but almost as bad was the person who advised a young physician just starting out in his profession, to furnish his office with the following pieces: One large sofa, two large armchairs, one smaller standing chair, all with most ornate and highly polished cherry-wood frames, and upholstered in copper-colored *silk plush*. In addition there was a small sofa of the same ornate wood but upholstered in peacock-blue silk plush! Now, in all honesty, were not these pieces of furniture almost as inappropriate in the office of a young physician as was the picture of a pretty girl for the advertisement aforesaid?

Appropriateness should be the key-note in all

furnishing. Better go without some piece of furniture than buy something that jars or is out of keeping, just because it is "cheap," or "just fits in." By waiting a little while, possibly you may find something with both of these qualities and with the added virtue of being entirely in keeping.

There are several things to be considered besides the pocketbook. The size of the room, its shape, the height of the ceiling, the use to which it is to be put and the covering that is on the floor (unless one can change the last to suit new conditions). A large room sparsely furnished with little spindling chairs and tables is no more appropriate than a small one that is overloaded with large, massive pieces.

A combination of styles is equally out of place. The newer custom of giving the bride an order for some piece of furniture so that she may herself choose what will best go with her other things, is much wiser than the old way where the donor selected something which he or she thought "so pretty." A spindle-legged Louis Quinze chair, delicate in structure as a Dresden china shepherdess, has proved the despair of a bride, who had not another article of furniture with

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which it could be appropriately placed, and yet who, for politic reasons, did not dare to hide it in some obscure corner.

The ideal way to furnish a house, if the engagement be a reasonably long one, is for the young couple who propose to marry, to pick up pieces now and again, rather than buy all at one time. This gives each piece a sentimental value all its own, entirely apart from any money consideration. After a scheme of furnishing has been decided on, and this should always be done, a chair here, a desk there, a mirror somewhere else, may often be found at a bargain, pieces odd in themselves but fitting admirably into the general scheme.

If, too, the friends of the young couple know what they are doing, many an odd piece will fall into their hands in the way of a gift.

However, such an ideal state of affairs is not by any means always the case. Then one must do what circumstances permit. Then one must see what best can be done with the money in hand.

The mistake so often made is in buying too many articles for the money. If, for instance, the young couple are in very moderate circum-

stances, it is far better to buy four good dining-room chairs, rather than six cheaper ones. In their circumstances, they will hardly be likely to entertain in a large way at dinner, and the two extra chairs give them plenty for that most delightful of all ways of entertaining, "having in a couple of friends." Later two more chairs may be added as means permit, which will give them the six which are now regarded as a full set.

Perhaps it would be as well for the young couple to start out in their furnishing in either of the two following ways, both of which are to be commended to those with but little money to spend. One way is to furnish all the rooms, partially, buying only such pieces that are absolutely necessary, and adding other pieces as opportunity and means permit. The other way is to omit furnishing such rooms as are not immediately needed, but fully furnishing those in use. In either case, purchasing a new piece from time to time, is a constant source of pleasure.

And one thing should be remembered: Good taste demands that rooms shall be scantily furnished rather than to have cheap, poorly-made furniture, or a quantity of ordinary bric-à-brac.

The fault to be found mainly with the less

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expensive furniture is that it is too ornate, that the doors have either too much play, or too little so that they stick, and that the drawers do not run in and out easily. Still it is possible to find inexpensive furniture without these faults, if one be willing to take the trouble to look for it.

One may readily get along in a bedroom with a bedstead, a bureau, a wash-stand (without this last if there be running water) a rocker and two standing chairs. Having these to begin with, home taste and genius, exercised on curtains, shelves, screens, etc., will make the real furnishing. Then one by one, a chiffonier, a lounge, more chairs or a table, may be added.

If the man of the family be anything of a carpenter and the woman one of taste and ingenuity, much may be done toward furnishing at very small expense. Given an enamel bedstead and its furnishings, a charming little nest of a guest-chamber may be evolved by the expenditure of a very few dollars. A dry-goods box, set upon its side, the former lid converted into two or three shelves, and the whole draped in some inexpensive but artistic material, makes a very acceptable bureau for the few days that are generally the limit of a visit. A wash-stand made for herself

by one ingenious woman is worth description. On its side she turned a box the proper size; the discarded cover she divided into three pieces; one piece she nailed on again at the bottom where it formed a receptacle for shoes; the second piece she converted into a shelf at a convenient spacing inside; the third piece she covered plain with the same material with which she draped the box, and set it up at the back; thus forming a sort of background for her toilet-set, and serving at the same time as a protection to the wall.

An upholstered box for waists makes a nice seat, and a long one for dresses or bedclothing, may be made to do duty as a lounge.

In all of this kind of furnishing, however, simplicity should be the key-note. A "gingerbread effect" of ruffles and puffs and puckers, entirely destroys the original idea.

It is surprising, too, what may be done with old furniture that has seen its day. A can of paint will convert the most disreputable looking thing sometimes, into an article that is a joy. A mother showed a friend once a room which she had just fixed up for a daughter that was coming home from boarding-school. The furniture was

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all white and the upholstering was in flowered chintz.

"Where did you get all this pretty white furniture?" she asked.

"I made it. Do you remember that gray cottage bureau I had in the nursery, and that old walnut wash-stand, and that disreputable oak chair with all the varnish and half the stain off? Well, I scrubbed them all with strong hot soda to take off the old dirt, and then I applied three coats of white paint and one of enamel. I have oak and walnut and cottage all here but no one would know it, and then I gave her bed two good coats of enamel. Behold what the genius and handiwork of woman have done!"

What was in this instance carried out in white, could be done in any other color scheme. Black, for instance, can be made to look like ebony if too high a polish is not given. A very good black is made by dissolving dry lamp-black in turpentine to the consistency of milk, then adding an ounce of Japan drier to a quart of paint. The drier forms a sticking and a drying medium. If one coat does not cover, it may be applied until satisfactory, allowing a day or two to intervene between the coats. This is also good for metal

ornaments, but one which is recommended as more durable, is made by adding dry lamp-black to metal lacquer and thinning with turpentine.

A dainty little reception room was once furnished by an enterprising young woman at almost no expense. She found several odd chairs, much the worse for wear, a small table from which most of the varnish had disappeared, an old-fashioned settee, and a discarded wicker tabouret. All these she carefully scrubbed and then treated to three coats of delicate green enamel, and she had as dainty furniture as one could wish. The floor she stained a dark green, and from several balls of dark woolen carpet-rags she knit three pretty rugs, using large, long wooden needles and the ordinary plain knitting stitch. Fortunately the paper was one that harmonized with the green color scheme, and when the plain swiss curtains were hung at the windows and fastened back with dark green cord, the room was truly charming.

For natural finished wood, says an authority, there is nothing better than a coat of shellac, the kind that one makes at home by adding the yellow flakes to 95° alcohol. This will dissolve in a

few hours if shaken frequently, to allow all the particles to touch the alcohol. Scratches or marred places on furniture or woodwork may be remedied with a coat of this shellac, but it must be sparingly, quickly and evenly applied or disaster will follow. Both for ultimate evenness and for drying, it is better to apply two or three very thin coats rather than one thick one.

It happens sometimes, that the young house-keeper is fortunate enough to inherit old-fashioned mahogany furniture. If so, let her beware how she cares for it, for handsome old furniture badly kept, is much more undesirable than something more modern which is in condition. To be at its best, this beautiful old furniture requires a care that few people realize.

In the first place, not every one knows that good old mahogany never suffers from a thorough cleansing bath; so that just "cleaning off" and polishing the intricate carvings is not enough. It looks well for the time possibly, but is now in condition to collect more dust than ever.

At least twice a year, all old mahogany pieces should be subjected to a thorough washing with warm water, in which a small quantity of white

soap has been dissolved, and to which has been added olive oil in the proportion of one tablespoonful to the quart.

Every part must be gone over with a sopping wet soft cloth, so that the water may reach every crevice. A soft brush may be used to scrub the carvings or a sharp-pointed stick with a piece of cloth wrapped around it may be used to get the interstices thoroughly clean.

The washing completed, the wood should be well rinsed in clear, warm water and thoroughly dried with a perfectly clean soft cloth, which must be renewed from time to time in the process of work. Only a dry cloth may be used. After the wood has been well dried, a harmless polish should be applied. Linseed oil and turpentine are excellent for this purpose. In our grandmothers' time, a flannel cloth permeated with beeswax was used for this final polishing. For flat surfaces, a soft, fine-grained woolen cloth, wrapped around a block of convenient size, makes the best polisher. The block gives the hand a purchase and the arm is able to bear down more vigorously. It is really work to be done by a man's strength; but if the women of the family have it to do, by taking one piece at a time, they

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will get around eventually and may pride themselves on the finished work.

Among professional polishers, a large, long paint brush is used to insert the polish in the crevices. This is something which the house-keeper may well copy.

But remember that the price of victory is rubbing, rubbing hard, and again rubbing.

In furnishing, the side walls are, as an ordinary thing, given too little consideration. If their color be irremediable, that is, if one has not the money required to change them, then the general tone of the rest of the room should be made to conform as nearly as possible to their color scheme. But if one can, the walls should be treated as a part of the general furnishing.

"I cannot help it! I must have it repapered. I simply can *not* live with that paper in my bedroom!" exclaimed a young woman about to move into a new residence.

"What is the matter with the paper?" inquired a friend wonderingly. "It is pretty and new."

"All that, I grant you. But in the first place it is not a bedroom paper. It is meant for a sitting-room, and the people before me used the

room for that. In the second place, can't you imagine my furniture backed by that paper? It gives me the shivers to think of it; and just think living with such a combination, day after day! No! I shall have it repapered appropriately, at least, even if I have an inexpensive paper put on."

Her scheme was carried out in a pretty, inexpensive paper which looked anything but "cheap" on the wall, and her room harmonized. Had she left it as it was, there would have been a jarring note wherever one turned the eye. Furniture, floor coverings, and walls would have been constantly warring with each other.

Says an authority, in writing of walls and their treatment, in disfavor of wall-papers: "The wall coating or decoration should be of a material that does not hide dirt, lends itself readily to easy cleansing, that is of a soft, permanent color, and that will not close up the pores of the original plaster. First of all, our walls should be clean and sanitary; after that, as artistic as we can make them. . . .

"In addition to the sanitary value, the color effect of the tinted wall is much more restful to the eye and taxes the brain less than do the

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involved conventional designs and grotesque figures of recent attempts at decoration. . . .

“The material base of ideal wall coating should be of a substance that is easily recoated and that does not involve any labor of the preparation of the wall surface for future application.”

The tinting of a wall, is something not to be lightly decided upon. The color should be of the most judicious selection to bring out the best points of the room. After the tint is once applied, a change is not easily made.

After the walls are satisfactorily tinted, comes the artistic treatment of them. The placing of the pictures in a home makes all the difference in the world to its general tone. This point receives entirely too little consideration, as an ordinary thing. Where a picture “fits” as to size, there it goes, no matter whether appropriate or not as to subject or to light. Hence one often sees an incongruous jumble that sets one’s teeth on edge. A life-sized crayon of “Grandpa,” which is doubtless very dear to the family but is not the least artistic, will be put to stand guard over some airy little water-color; a night-scene which requires a strong light to bring out its character will be placed in some compara-

tively obscure corner, while a sunset with all its glory of red and orange will face the largest window in the room.

Far better, both in relation to our pictures and to our ornaments, would it be if we adopted the plan of the Japanese. We are told by a writer on wall decoration that the Japanese fully appreciate the beauty of empty spaces; they go to the extreme of keeping their ornaments in warehouses, displaying but one or two at a time in their homes.

With the Japanese an ornament is purely for decorative purposes; otherwise it has no place in the home.

When displayed, a great deal of thought and care are given to the correct placing of it, so as to show it to the most artistic advantage.

Says this same writer in speaking of pictures: "Few of the people who have artistic taste in furniture know how to decorate their walls artistically; or, if they know good pictures, they have too little idea of proper framing.

"By good pictures is not necessarily meant paintings—they are for the favored few who can afford to own them; but black-and-white reproductions of the best pictures may be had at a

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nominal cost, and if suitably framed and properly hung are beautiful ornaments for any home.

“A good black-and-white print of a masterpiece is vastly better than a poor painting.”

As a door is never an artistic object, whenever draperies can be substituted, the more esthetic the effect. Even the closet door may be removed and a pole and curtain put in its place. This does double duty for no one can ever leave it standing open, an offense to the eye of the beholder.

While you are furnishing the house, don't forget to do as well by the kitchen as by any other part. If its size will permit, some kind of lounge there should be. This may be of the simplest kind that is within your means ; merely a long box covered with a corn-shuck mattress will do. A covering of striped ticking, red and white if you like, will look well as long as it lasts and will always come out of the laundry looking fresh. With a pillow of the same, you will have a place of rest which will serve to lighten may a day's labor.

If there be no room for a lounge, then have an easy rocking-chair. Why should you stand or sit on a hard kitchen chair while you are wait-

ing for the cake to brown or the potatoes to boil? Rest, rest, rest, every possible minute is the keynote to a long life and comfortable old age. Never to keep oneself keyed up to an unnecessary pitch or strain, is true philosophy. "Only when you have learned to *let yourself down*," says some philosopher, "have you learned to live."

CHAPTER VI

THE FINANCE PROBLEM

AMONG "Polly Oliver's Problems" was one which confronts every inexperienced housekeeper—that of keeping accounts square between the "sugar-bowl," "the cracker jar" and "the cigar box." For poor Polly Oliver, you remember, had made these articles the receptacles for various sums of money that were to be devoted to different household purposes, rent, fuel, and daily expenses. And Polly herself was in a constant state of confusion for a long while (until she learned how to manage) because the cracker jar was obliged to lend to the cigar box or the sugar-bowl had lent to the cracker jar. Adjusting these accounts was indeed "a problem."

But the idea is all right and, well carried out, produces most satisfactory results. Very few women understand bookkeeping, nor is an elaborate system necessary in housekeeping. There are but three things to be considered, the amount to be spent, the amount used, and the amount

left. If by some innocent device, this result is attained so that the housekeeper can know in a moment just how she stands, that is all that is necessary. For some, it simplifies matters very much to use different boxes for different sums. If that is the way they best understand their accounts, what is the difference? After all, the object is attained and that is all that is needed.

So let the young housekeeper persevere in any way that is most acceptable to herself, so long as she does keep an intelligent account of current expenses; and the box system is by no means a bad one, for with the best intentions in the world, there are some things which cannot be settled each week, or even each month possibly, like gas and fuel for instance.

The bill for the gas comes in once every three months generally, and it makes a big hole in the weekly or monthly amount when pay-day arrives, crippling one's resources pretty badly for a while. If, however, each week there is laid away in a box devoted to that purpose alone and so marked, an amount approximating what will be needed for that length of time, it will hardly be missed at the moment, and will be found a wonderful satisfaction when payment is due. It

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will not be necessary for the proper working of this plan, to examine the meter every week. The bills run quite evenly year after year, and the bill for last year for any one season will form a fairly accurate guide for the same season this year.

If coal is gotten in by the month, the same plan can be pursued. Each housekeeper knows just about what the need for fuel will be, and she can prepare to meet payment in the same way. By this means, the husband is saved an infinite amount of worry. The man who learns to put the money and all such matters of expenditure absolutely in his wife's hands, is the wise man.

It is needless to say, however, that the most economical way of getting in coal is by the quantity, taking advantage of the lowest rates that summer affords. Coal is sure to advance anywhere from fifty cents to a dollar per ton as cold weather draws nigh, and the consumer must pay the price for his delay. If anything extraordinary comes, like a blizzard or a strike, it is likely to double or even treble in price, and furthermore, there is every possibility of a moment to come when a would-be purchaser could

not obtain a pound of coal for "love or money," so great will be the demand. During a recent strike, an imploring note came from a next door neighbor, begging for two or three bushels of coal as the baby was taken ill and they had no fire. The demand was at once gladly granted though the householder the day before had paid nine dollars for the half ton in his cellar, and considered himself lucky to get it at that.

And even if there were no possibility of strikes and blizzards affecting the price of coal, running it up sometimes to almost prohibitory prices, it is strongly advised that the coal supply be laid in not later than April, as in that month that commodity touches its bottom price. If one can lay aside weekly, during the previous months, a small sum which will aggregate the coal bill when April comes around so much the better, and the yearly expenses will be more evenly distributed.

The same should be pursued relative to the rent. If a man's salary comes in weekly, so much should be sternly set aside each week to meet the demand at the end of the month.

Now let us have a little talk about economical purchasing. In the household where the best

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principles of economy prevail, the wife has a regular allowance for regular expenses. The family is run on business principles. The husband and wife are partners in a business arrangement. Each is willing to make some sacrifices, and the rights of each are respected by the other. The husband hands over to his wife periodically, the stipulated sum and then no more demands an accounting of her stewardship than she demands of his. If he be wise, he makes this allowance sufficient to cover all household arrangements, and then he is never troubled with petty details which are so annoying. What difference to him whether the two dollars went to the butcher or to the baker? The sooner a man divorces himself from such matters the better.

The axiom which should be burnt in across the brains of a couple starting housekeeping is, "Pay as you go; a pass-book at the shop is death to economy." If you have been accustomed to having one, stop now—this minute.

"But," cries Regina, "how can I? I haven't any money ahead with which to begin a cash account. When my allowance comes in, it must go to settle the pages of the book for things already used."

The case is not so hopeless as it seems. The change can be accomplished with the active coöperation of the rest of the household. The next time the monthly allowance is due, go to the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker and say frankly, "I find I owe you so much. From this time I propose to pay cash for everything. I will run up no more bills and I will pay off by degrees all that is standing against my account."

"That sounds well," says Regina, "but where am I going to get the money to settle these bills?"

You are going to save it, Regina, through adopting the cash system. And while you are performing this miracle, your family will live very nearly as well as they have been doing, though luxuries will probably be somewhat curtailed. This is the point on which you must ask their coöperation. If your object and plan be clearly explained to them, every member, surely, will be glad to make some little sacrifice of the palate for a few weeks until you are ahead of the game.

"But," demands Regina again, "where does the economy come in? The things cost just so much and I will be obliged to pay for them first

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or last. So where do I save any money? All I can see is that we must live in a plainer fashion. Where does the saving come in?"

It comes in right here. The word luxuries used a moment ago, is the key-note to one part of it. If you are running a pass-book, over and over again articles are bought to "save trouble" when they really are luxuries that you cannot afford. A can of fruit for dessert when you have the materials in the house to make a pudding at one-fourth the cost—a jar of jam—a box of this—a glass of that—so handy to have in the house and save trouble. Think over this and see if it is not so.

But this is not all of the difficulty by any means. There are several, but the greatest is the fact that you have no choice and the store-keeper knows you have no choice. You drop into the shop some morning, we will say, looking for a cheap vegetable. He has nothing, or if he has, he does not show it to you. All you find is something in advance of the season, like peas in February, and if you take anything at all, it must be at double or treble what you intended, or what you can afford.

The same way with meats. You have deter-

mined on a stew and intend to purchase a piece of the brisket. "No brisket to-day, madam," is the storekeeper's reply, "or at least none that I would like to show *you*" (flattering emphasis on the "you"); "but I have an uncommonly fine roast to-day; or how would you like a steak?"

And so, perforce of having no money in your pocket, dissatisfied but helpless, you take a steak at five times the price you meant to pay for your stew. It is so with everything. You may not want the finest grade of prunes, for instance, but if that is all your storekeeper has, those are what you must get when you wish that article. With your money in your purse, you are quite independent of the tradesman and can go where you please. While there is much truth in the idea that you are well served where you are well known, it is by no means a bad thing for the storekeeper to learn that you only trade with him *because* you are well served and that you are by no means wedded to his store. Often, too, a new customer will receive special concessions in the hope of getting permanent custom.

Further, storekeepers will have different grades of different articles. Because your butcher has very fine beef, it by no means follows that his mut-

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ton is of the same grade. Do not take anything on faith. Look around until you find places where each article is the best for the price—beef, here—lamb, there—butter and eggs somewhere else—and then stick to those places for those articles as long as they keep up to the standard. It does not pay to run from place to place.

One other reason for not keeping a book is that when you have one, articles are frequently charged up that should belong to some one's else account. This may not be intentional on the part of the storekeeper, but the fact remains that such errors do occur. If the pass-book is kept at the store for a few days to be "made up," it is very difficult to prove that you haven't had and eaten the roast which you have never seen, but with which you have been charged two days before. Of course, you can refuse to pay for it, but there is always an unpleasantness and you wish mightily that you did not owe the man anything so that you could deal somewhere else.

Try also to *think* for the good of your family and your purse. Some day, for dinner give them carrots delicately cooked with a cream dressing, instead of green peas at three times the cost; white beans either plain boiled and dressed with

plenty of butter, or home-baked, instead of cauliflower; rice or macaroni as a vegetable instead of asparagus.

Then, too, devote a good deal of thought to left-overs devising ways of serving them attractively. Because meat has been cooked once, there is no need for its being unappetizing the next day simply because it is served cold.

The truly economical housekeeper will never order at the door even if the most trusted clerk of her most trusted storekeeper call for the order. (Above all, she will never leave her maid to order.) She will go to the shop herself, unless she employs an experienced housekeeper, and she will see with her own eyes everything she pays for. She will not take the word of the tradesman that the butter is good (unless it be a brand which she is accustomed to buy), nor that the cheese is mild. She will see these facts for herself before ordering the articles sent. The seller may be entirely sincere in the opinion which he expresses, but his idea of good butter or mild cheese may not tally with that of the purchaser. And while one does not wish to seem fussy, it is just as well for tradesmen to understand that the buyer is particular and knows what she wants.

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Again, all meats should be examined, cut off and weighed before the buyer pays for them. A housekeeper who for once broke her rule, *ordered* (instead of going to buy) of her trusted butcher a three-pound steak, wishing a specially nice one. When it was taken from the ice to cook for dinner, the maid discovered, instead of the nice, thick, juicy steak ordered, *three* one-pound slabs of beef which it was utterly impossible to broil. Such a thing as that could never have occurred had she gone to the store.

Another instance is that of a housekeeper leaving an order for a "fourteen-pound turkey." The turkey was a fine one, but it did not occur to the maid to weigh it. It seemed to the mistress to be very large as it came to the table but the truth never occurred to her. When she came to pay for it a week later, she found that instead of *fourteen* pounds it was *twenty*,—six pounds more than she needed or desired. As it cost twenty-five cents per pound, she found the extra weight rather expensive.

All these things count up quickly in household expenses. Two pounds when you want but a pound and a quarter, three and a half when two and a half will answer; sometimes a difference

of two or three pounds means just so much additional and uncalled-for expense. Naturally, the butcher cannot cut meat to weigh exactly the amount called for, it may be a little lighter or a little heavier, but such enormous differences savor, at least, of carelessness, and a carelessness not to be tolerated.

One may often find bargains, too, that are real bargains. Perhaps the word "bargains" does not sound very attractive in connection with food, but they are to be found nevertheless, and often prove of great advantage to the housekeeper. This is more especially true of the season of fresh fruits and green vegetables. On Saturday afternoons, after three o'clock, one may buy for a mere song fruits that were held in the morning at a prohibitory price. This is especially the case if one is willing to take the lot, whatever it may be. For the storekeeper is glad to sell at any price, material which if kept over Sunday, he must throw away at a dead loss. While Saturday afternoon is not an ideal time for canning or preserving, the thrifty housekeeper will sweep aside other considerations and take advantage of the bargain. As she looks at her well-filled shelves, and thinks what a saving

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they mean to her when winter comes, she will rejoice over the few hours she has spent on them rather than regret a lost Saturday afternoon, which she meant to devote to pleasure.

Sometimes, too, one may buy an odd cut of beef which is possibly twice as much as one wants. If taking the whole piece, it can probably be purchased for a much lower rate. After a good steak is cut from it, the remainder may be salted down for a future boiling and one has the satisfaction of a steak at the price of boiling beef.

Rather than keep his fish over night, the fishmonger will sell his last one, a really nice one, for almost nothing. So, for the sake of economy, why not have fish instead of the meat you planned to buy ?

Of course, much of the above does not apply to the country housekeeper, as many of her supplies are raised on the place ; but she can adapt some of the suggestions to her mode of life and profit accordingly. The following plan, tried by one young housekeeper, is equally appropriate for the dweller in city or country.

After communing with herself and her husband this young woman decided upon the follow-

ing original scheme. Ten dollars was taken from a very meagre hoard in the bank and invested in supplies at wholesale prices. Where they had been buying singly, they stocked up by the dozen. Of sugar they bought fifty pounds, also. (On sugar, however, there is but little profit in the quantity, at any time; but that little was theirs.) Soap, instead of being bought by the pound was purchased by the dozen bars, at just so much less per pound. The ten dollars did not supply any spectacular amount of goods, but it did very well for a starter.

Now, here is where the beauty of the scheme came in. The wife, when wishing to use the goods in hand, put into a box the *retail price* of each article used; the profit, which had heretofore been given to the storekeeper, now under the new system belonged to the house. Thus, while nothing cost any more than it had been costing all along, there was steadily growing a little surplus which represented the difference between wholesale and retail prices. As soon as five dollars was collected in the box, it was at once invested at wholesale rates, and sometimes, on bargain days, was made to do the duty of seven or eight dollars. By this means, the variety

and quantity in store were increased till the shelves were a joy, and, eventually, the original ten dollars were put back in bank. Both husband and wife felt, however, that the interest that money had drawn while out of bank amounted to two hundred per cent., so great was the gain.

All these little economies the housekeeper learns by degrees and often only by painful experience, unless she has had a mother who taught her household arts before she left home. But if she keep her eyes well open and her wits about her, she will soon discover that she is making one dollar do the work of two in some other woman's hand. She will not be mean either; and her family will be well-fed and comfortable and no one around will be oppressed by a feeling of stint.

The least complicated way for a woman to arrange her finances is probably to deduct the regular expenses, fuel, gas, etc., as previously proposed, and then mentally divide her money by the number of days it must cover. By this means, keeping an itemized account for each day, she can tell pretty well where she stands at any moment. Some days she will "run short" of her

amount, some days she will "run over," but she will soon learn to keep rather within the allowance than to overstep it; she will soon find a little surplus. Now is the time to start a "left-over" box; perhaps the account may begin with only a few pennies, but they are at least a nucleus, and they will be there to call on some day when she must "run over" to a small amount and does not wish to encroach on the next day's allowance. But soon her experience, aided by her awakened pride, will enable her to contrive her resources so that she will not be obliged to draw upon her "left-over" box. And oh, the joy of the day when she deposits in the saving fund, her first five dollars won by careful management and hard thought!

CHAPTER VII

FALSE ECONOMY WHICH IS WASTE

THERE are in a household, however, two other things to be saved as well as money, no matter in what walk one's life lies. These are time and labor. To many, in fact to most, money seems the only important item, and almost no expenditure of time and labor is considered as too great if money may be saved; whereas, the saving of money is often the most foolish thing one can do.

Most true is this of the purchasing of devices invented for labor-saving in the kitchen. A man, recognizing the necessity for the latest thing, will put into his business house expensive improvements well knowing that the saving of time and labor will, in the end, more than meet the extra expenditure. Or he will hail a hack and ride three blocks to send off a twenty-five cent telegram, because it saves him time.

But a woman will beat up eggs with a fork or slice potatoes with a knife and think she is "saving the expense" of the latest machines invented for those purposes, all unmindful of the fact that

she is using up a quantity of time and nervous force that might be put to better purpose.

One of the most economical things a woman can do is to keep alert to all the new household devices. There may be many that she will never need, and to cumber her closets with these would be more than foolish. But new inventions are constantly appearing and whenever she sees one that will save her time or labor, it is false economy to let it go by and "save the price."

Watching the papers, especially the pages devoted to women's interests, will show her from time to time many new and not really expensive articles, which she should have. Further, as she shops, she should be on the lookout for such things. One housekeeper, known to the writer, no matter for what she is shopping, invariably runs into the hardware department, "just to see if they have anything new to lighten the household work or to save money."

It is surprising how many people have no soap-shaker. Why, as an economical proposition, a soap-shaker is most important. In one of these little wire cages, the smallest particles of soap may be put and the whole used up to the last crumb.

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Again, considering the saving of labor, it is surprising how few women have a sink sieve, through which the dish-water is run, all particles thus being strained out and the labor of cleaning the sink almost eliminated.

These are only two things, the lack of which indicates a false economy. Why should one expend time and labor in knead, knead, kneading, and beat, beat, beating, when there are bread and cake mixers to be had? Why should one burn one's fingers in removing pans from the oven, when there are pie-plate lifters that do the work? Why should one watch and wait and use up fuel when one can have a fireless cooker in which to place the cooking food, so that one can go away indefinitely and attend to other duties while the cooking goes on unaided?

I know—"our grandmothers didn't have all these folderols, and we're no better housekeepers than they." Neither did our grandmothers have running water and a range, but that seems no good argument for our going back to pumps and an open fire with a crane.

Her personal accessories, too, go far toward the housewife's economy of time and labor. A big apron and short sleeves for kitchen work do much

to reduce labor as the house worker may move around at her ease without fear of soiling her dress, and an apron is so much more readily washed than is a dress. A large cloth attached to her side by a tape for immediate use when wanted—rubber bands to keep up sleeves that have not been shortened (pins are always coming out and are therefore nerve-trying)—hair secured so that no stray lock may slip and tickle—collar well pinned so that nothing may come loose and stick—all these and many more which every housekeeper will recognize for herself if her attention be drawn to them, are helps to good, quick work. They *seem* like small considerations, but they make up a mighty whole. A sudden pin-prick at a critical moment has spoiled a loaf of cake, and a loosened sleeve has overturned a boiling teakettle with disastrous results.

Now as it is a foregone conclusion that of the three—time, money and expense—no one can be saved without an extra expenditure of the other two, it remains with the housekeeper to decide which would be best spent.

It is woman's province to darn, piece, patch and contrive so that all may present a good appearance. But is not time put upon a darn

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sometimes foolishly expended? "There!" says *Mater* after an hour's hard work, "that won't last more than another wash but Jack will get a week's wear out of it." But does the "week's wear" pay for the nervous headache that she takes to bed with her, and the strained eyes? Or the medicine she must take to correct her condition? If Jack has anything else to put on, would it not be money saved to throw the much darned article away?

Moreover, if a household is to be carried on principles combining economy with comfort, all the members must take an interest in the solution of the problem, and not throw all the burden upon the shoulders of the housewife. In an article published recently in a current periodical, the ground is pretty well covered under the caption of "Where the Money Goes." The following are the main sources of leak. It may be readily seen that any one member of the family may be the source of the waste—a "notional" one by adding to the expense of the table—a careless one by not turning down the light—a captious one by discontentment with simple fare, no matter how good.

"Waste," says this article, "arises from failure

to watch the market and buy at a favorable time.

“It is wasteful to buy things because they are cheap on a slender chance that they may some time be used.

“A source of waste to be strongly condemned is the growing custom of paying high prices for cooked food at bakeries and delicatessen stores in order to save oneself the trouble of home cooking.

“To be condemned strongly is the growing custom of buying articles of food out of season when they are luxuries and the price is the highest—strawberries at Christmas, ‘spring lamb’ in January and asparagus in February.

“Waste arises from misuse and neglect of materials after purchase.

“Neglect as a source of waste is shown in a failure to care for each utensil and article of furniture so as to prolong its period of use.

“A considerable part of daily loss comes from waste of fuel.

“Waste of lights occurs chiefly in not turning down gas when leaving bedrooms or bath room.

“Meals cannot be economically served when

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special dishes must be prepared for notional people.

"A source of waste not always recognized is the common practice of ordering groceries and meat by telephone or from the man who calls for orders.

"Waste arises from a lack of thorough knowledge on the part of the housewife of the whole round of housekeeping. If the mistress herself does not know how to buy, how to cook, how to use, how to save, the case is hopeless.

"A large part of household waste arises from moral cowardice—a fear of seeming stingy keeps people from being saving."

There is nothing truer than the last mentioned clause.

Nevertheless, as the article before mentioned also says, there is waste, too, in false economy. It is always wasteful to buy articles of inferior quality, as sleazy towels and table-cloths that have no wear in them, or loosely woven matting that soon pulls apart, or poor food that cannot be eaten.

In confirmation of this sentiment let us quote the example of a certain German "haus-frau," who is a shining example of false economy.

"She has corset covers made of the cheapest possible muslin for eight cents each," says the article, "and works the buttonholes herself to save money. She does fancy work until a late hour in the evening by the light of one gas jet, which is turned down half-way to save the expense of light. She keeps her ice-box on the side of the kitchen away from the drain, and empties the water pan all summer for fear the sun might shine on the ice-box and waste the precious treasure within. Yet this same woman buys olive oil by the small bottle, throws away every scrap of cold meat, runs a charge account at a notoriously high-priced grocery, and complains about her bills! Three of her neighbors live comfortably on little more than half of what she spends for two."

CHAPTER VIII

ECONOMY OF WORK

As has been intimated heretofore, not the least of the economies of living is that of saving work, even though in order to do this, there is an initial outlay of expense. The saving of nervous wear, too, will be found to more than compensate. In this connection one cannot do better for the reader than give a summary of the various suggestions which have been gleaned from many sources.

But first, let us warn against one thing which, injudiciously used, is almost as great a thief of time as is procrastination. It is so insidious and withal so plausible that it has hold, under the guise of a friend, before one knows it.

This undesirable thing is the habit of attending to a duty "just while I think of it." We are aware that this seems like a bold statement, as promptness of action has been inculcated as a virtue from time immemorial. But one or two

illustrations will point the moral. Mother is—well, washing the dishes, let us say, if she has no maid. “There!” she exclaims to herself, “just while I think of it, I’ll go and darn that tear in Freddie’s coat; he’ll need it this afternoon.” And, oblivious of the fact that she will be going up-stairs anyway in the course of a half hour, she mounts the stairs, mends Freddie’s coat and returns to the kitchen—to find the water cold. The inference is obvious.

Just while she thinks of it, she goes down into the cellar for something which could wait until it was time to bring up the potatoes. Just while she thinks of it, she runs out for this, that, or the other thing, every one eventually necessary but no one of immediate requirement.

A pencil and note-book always at hand in the apron pocket, or attached to the side by tape or ribbon, would remedy all this. Each waiting item could then be jotted down as thought of, and attended to as convenient.

One saving of time is to have a work-basket in the dining-room closet. It should contain two spools each, coarse and fine, black and white cotton, with an extra spool of heavy thread, for tightening a loose button on the children’s shoes.

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A pair of scissors, a thimble, a cushion of needles and pins, are all that are further necessary.

Think of the steps saved and the "stitches in time" that may be taken!

Another suggestion is that the housewife shall have at her side during working hours, a pair of scissors, and a pincushion in which are not only pins but three or four needles threaded with black and white. Always at hand, no matter where she is or what she is doing, again she can take many "a stitch in time" which will later "save nine."

An excellent suggestion is the use of the clothes-wringer for mangling flat linens and towels. If this idea be followed out, many an odd moment may be utilized when no hot iron is at hand. This also is a saving of fuel.

A housekeeper of experience says that the thing which she has found most helpful as a time and labor-saver, is making her head take care of her feet. She has learned the habit of looking around, when she is leaving one room or floor for another, to see what she can carry up or down or out or in to save herself a trip. Sometimes in the morning as she goes over the house for its first inspection and "setting to rights"

after the children have gone to school and her husband is off for the day, she carries with her a fair-sized market basket. In this she puts everything that should be somewhere else—a handkerchief that Joe has dropped and which rightfully belongs with the soiled clothes; a rug to be taken down-stairs to be shaken; a curtain which is to change places with a screen, a book which she wishes to put in her hand-bag. Even a potted plant or two which she wishes to put down-stairs in the south window, may go in. In this way, loading up down-stairs, unloading and distributing up-stairs, loading up again up-stairs and readjusting down-stairs, one trip saves the time and trouble of a half dozen.

She likewise says that her labors are much lessened by training her children to do the same thing. I do not mean to carry a market basket around with them, but to learn to observe. Before they go to bed at night, they put their books in their appointed place, ready for school, and then put in order the sitting-room where they have been studying. The next morning there is none of that for "mother" or the maid to do, as is the case in so many families. All this serves the double purpose of saving the mother and of

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training the children to be useful, unselfish, observing members of society. Before they leave the room for bed, they look around and try to think if there be anything they can take up-stairs and save themselves or some one else a trip, a candle for mother's bedroom, a glass of water for grandma, or a glass of milk for an invalid.

The testimony of another is that she has found the *hanging-up habit* to be her salvation of time and work. When she first began housekeeping in her pretty, new, conveniently arranged little home, she was utterly surprised (not to say disgusted) at the amount of time it took for her to do her work.

She had started out with all the enthusiasm of the young and hopeful bride who means to do her best and has a preconceived notion that in such a "cunning little box of a house," housekeeping would be mere child's play, and she would have time for all sorts of delightful occupations and amusements. But one thing after another had to be shifted along till the "next day," and again the next until finally they were abandoned altogether for lack of time.

Discouraged, one day she stopped short and "took stock" of herself, her husband and her

household. She determined that a lack of the hanging-up habit was in a great degree the trouble. She had a talk with her husband who was a sensible man, and had an old-fashioned notion which he had imbibed from his mother and his home surroundings, that women's ideas were worth listening to. He saw the point of what she said and was quite willing to act upon her suggestion. At night, his discarded coat instead of being laid upon a chair, was hung up on its own nail, the latter act being quite as simple as the former, and saving his wife the trouble and time of doing it the next day. This is merely a sample of the kind of thing she meant, but the habit once formed with both of them, she was again surprised to see how the time increased.

Then she began to inspect her kitchen for saving of time and discovered that here, too, the hanging-up habit might be of great value. Instead of laying things on shelves or tucking them away in drawers, she arranged for nails and hooks in the most convenient place, directly in front of where she worked; and anything that could be hung, she hung. Even her broom, after it had fallen down in its corner three times in one morning, because she was in a hurry each time and

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did not stop long enough to place it securely, she hung it on a nail all of its own, and now when it is hung there, it *stays*.

Another housekeeper who already had the hanging-up habit says that her kitchen work has been much simplified by her reducing the number of things she has around. She believes in all the latest inventions and labor-saving devices; but she does not believe in a multiplication of pots, kettles and pans. She has few, and these before her, hung up in plain view. As they are few and are much in use, nothing has a chance to become dusty. She does not have in a row as some do, a teacup, a pint cup and a quart cup. She has a graduated quart cup which hangs on one nail. (Before she had this, she measured all with a teacup.) She likewise has a graduated tablespoon in which are marked the teaspoon and the half teaspoon. No time taken guessing.

Another housekeeper says that by having her laundry work done on Saturday instead of Monday she gains in two ways—she gains a half day, for the Saturday and Monday cleaning up are done at the same time. The second gain is the fact that the maid has Sunday for rest between her two hardest days and comes to the iron-

ing so much fresher, that it is finished up more quickly.

A number of smaller suggestions from various sources are well worth noting, as being the experience of individuals. They also show how each woman may, by her own ingenuity, help herself in a hundred and one ways.

For instance, to keep kettle covers and galvanized pie plates from dropping from shelves and tables in pantry get three laths and two slats about one inch and a half thick and eighteen inches long. Nail one lath at the end of slats on either end, forming the bottom; the two remaining laths about four inches apart. Nail it anywhere it would be convenient. It will give ample space for covers, etc., and save wear and nerve fag.

A high bake-oven on a level with the housewife's shoulders will eliminate stooping. Oilcloth on all the kitchen and pantry shelves is easily kept clean. Outlet pipes should be connected with the refrigerator, so that the drain pan won't have to be emptied. A tall stool is useful for the housewife to sit on when ironing or working at a table. The bowl in which butter and sugar are to be creamed for cake should be scalded.

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A Canton flannel bag made up with the downy side out is a great convenience on sweeping days. Slip it over the broom and dust the walls and woodwork with it. A ruffle across the bottom adds to its usefulness.

To beat the whites of eggs quickly put in a pinch of salt. The cooler the eggs the quicker they will froth. Putting them in the refrigerator for an hour or so before using, to thoroughly chill them, will also assist the process. A warm egg will never beat well.

Cleaning mirrors or window-panes by washing with a cloth dipped in alcohol and polishing with a chamois skin, or crumpled tissue-paper, is much quicker than with water. Coal-oil is also much better for cleaning windows than is water and is less expensive than alcohol. By using either of these fluids, the windows may be cleaned the coldest day in winter without any danger of freezing. If coal-oil be used on the outside, the glass remains clean much longer than by any other process as the rain will not cling to it, leaving the dust on the pane after it dries.

Speaking of coal-oil, it is a great labor-saver in paint-cleaning. A wiping with coal-oil instantly

removes finger-marks ; and if dirt on paint is obstinate because it has been on so long, and the paint be wet with coal-oil and allowed to stand for a few moments, it can be cleaned with no difficulty. Also, for cleaning enameled tubs and basins, nothing can be better. Just a dozen drops or so will cleanse an entire bath-tub, taking off instantly every bath-mark.

There are those, however, who very much object to the odor of coal-oil. Almost as good for this purpose, but not doing its work so quickly, is a half lemon, dipped in common salt. Many people use sand soap but this causes infinitesimal scratches on the surface of the enamel and gradually more and more is the enamel susceptible to the accumulation of dirt.

Now let us consider the dishwashing, for here is where the housekeeper may save herself, or teach her maid to save herself, much unnecessary work. For to dishwashing there are decidedly two ways, one harder, one easier.

If it be possible, that is if the dinner be of a sort to permit it and one is not hurried, it is well to wash up and get out of the way all the cooking utensils one has used in the process ; this leaves a clear field for the soiled dishes after the

meal. The kitchen is neater and one has more heart to attack the mass.

"But," it may be asked, "how would this be possible when a woman is doing her own work?"

In answer one may use the old proverb, and reply, "What man has done man may do," which applies equally to woman. The writer has in mind two housekeepers who are generally able to do this. (Not always, of course.) It takes experience, but until one tries it, one does not know how much may be accomplished in this way.

The two housekeepers spoken of arrange to have the dinner ready ten or fifteen minutes ahead of time, dished and kept hot. If a steamer with two or three compartments has been used for the vegetables, it is very quickly cleansed and the hot water is right at hand in the bottom receptacle. A roasting pan or a greasy stew-pot must stand with water in, of course, and receive attention later, but a broiler may be washed at once.

If this plan is not found practicable, however, a good idea is, after the meal, to wash all cooking utensils before beginning on the dishes. One housekeeper, who has done this for years, declares she would not follow any other method ;

as, once the pots and pans are out of the way, she feels that all the drudgery is over, and the washing of the dishes, using, of course, a fresh pan of hot water, is a very simple matter.

Plenty of hot water and soap (with also a good powder) are requisites for the pots and pans, which need so much more vigorous cleansing than the more delicate ware, but the first great necessity is plenty of soft paper. Newspaper well crumpled is very suitable for the purpose. After the pans are scraped, and well wiped out with soft paper, hardly a trace of the original contents, whether they have been greasy or not, remains to soil the water. These papers it is the work of a moment to burn up under the grate (not *in*, as that deadens the fire) and there is ready a pile of utensils, already more than half clean. If some one should prove more obstinate and not entirely amenable either to the scraping or to the wiping out, some cleansing powder shaken in with scalding water poured over it, will generally loosen up all particles after a few moments.

This process of wiping out the soiled plates and utensils has three advantages, one a little remote and perhaps not often considered. First, it

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quickens the process of washing; second, it is daintier, for one does not have all the greasy water to contend with; and third, it helps keep the drain-pipes in order as it permits no unnecessary grease to pass through them. If one uses this soft paper process, and once a day puts into the sink a few lumps of washing-soda, pouring boiling water over them, there will never be any use for the plumber to come open up the pipe, unless, of course, some extraneous substance finds its way down, like a pin or a broom splint, which will sometimes happen, with the best care. Or one may have a careless or unprincipled maid who will lift the strainer if it happen to be loose, and let down something which she is too lazy to dispose of otherwise.

As to the method of washing the dishes, that must be somewhat a question of experiment with space and conditions. While it is well to stack them all, to save time and steps, if one be cramped for room, it is an advantage sometimes to stack them in the dining-room, bring out one kind at a time, wash and dry them and take them back when one goes for another quantity. All greasy dishes should be wiped with the soft paper or left over bits of bread before stacking.

Some housekeepers keep their rinsing pan on the stove all the time they are at work, which certainly assures the water being constantly hot. If the water be very hot (but not boiling, as boiling water used too constantly will crack the enamel on the china, making fine lines which are called "fire-cracks") the labor of wiping the dishes is cut in half, especially if a drainer be used. One need not buy a specially made drainer, as a colander or any other kind of an ordinary drainer will serve the purpose. A colanderful lifted out of the hot water will be dry of itself by the time another colanderful is ready, and the dishes will be as clean and as bright as if polished with a cloth. Think what a saving of time and labor this is! Further, think how it saves the wear and tear of the dish-towels! One must look at them all and may find here and there an undried drop; but the main body of them is ready to put away.

If the pots and pans are a bugbear to the new housekeeper, the glasses and silver are a problem. When it comes to washing glasses, opinions vary. One expert housekeeper never permits her glasses to be rinsed. They are the first things washed and are wiped immediately out of the hot suds.

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Thus and thus only she contends can they be made brilliant.

Another equally good authority, a butler of long experience, never permits glass of any kind, particularly that which is cut, either to go into hot water or be wiped. Cold water and soap, cold water for rinsing, and then draining, but no *wiping* except just at the edges where the water has settled, and this only with tissue-paper well crumpled. It is said, too, that a little washing-blue added to the water in which glass is rinsed, will give it a beautiful lustre.

The weekly cleaning of the silver, which in some families amounts almost to a sacred rite, so religiously is it adhered to no matter what befalls, is a bugbear, whether the work fall upon mistress or maid. Many excellent housekeepers, however, avail themselves of various labor-saving devices in this respect and thus move the performance along to once a month or even more seldom still. And yet their silver is just as bright and well kept as those who labor with it once a week.

Oatmeal, dry, is a wonderful silver brightener. Think how easy it would be to brighten up some dulled piece with an application of dry

oatmeal on a soft cloth at dishwashing time! It would be well, possibly, to keep unused silver in a box of dry oatmeal. For, according to another authority, silver that is not used often will not tarnish if kept in ordinary dry flour. A simple brushing, with a soft brush to go in the cracks, prepares it for use when needed.

According to another authority: "A teaspoonful of liquid ammonia used in a warm suds is a great brightener of silver and glassware. It gives glass a very brilliant polish. When washing the silver use a small brush where the silver is ornamented. Rinse in hot water and dry quickly and thoroughly. If silverware is kept bright in this way it will not need the usual weekly or monthly polishing with whiting or other brightening agent."

Another says that to save labor, and at the same time keep the household silverware bright without constant polishing, camphor is valuable. If a lump of this be placed on each shelf of the closet or cabinet where the silver is kept a thorough cleaning and polishing is necessary only every few months. A lump of camphor the size of an egg should be kept in the drawer or chest with the flat silver.

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Still a fourth gives a very simple method of lightening this work, in the use of ordinary cooking soda (bicarbonate); one always has that at hand, and a little rubbed on spots here and there or used to brighten up a dulled piece, will be found a convenience.

The last authority says that the great secret of keeping silver looking nice *all* the time without any of the labor of "cleaning day," is to have at hand some good cleaner and with it remove spots or dullness at washing time. A spot of egg stain or that made with pickle or mustard may be removed in a moment, if taken while fresh, but if laid aside is very hard to erase. And done singly, the time of doing is not missed. For this purpose, nothing is better than one of the guaranteed and proven fluid cleansers. There is one which, while perfectly harmless, removes all stain in a moment, and that without making the hands feel so unpleasant as do the powders.

Another good thing to have at hand is a section of jeweler's chamois, if it can be obtained (it is rather difficult to get). This chamois is charged with rouge and the lightest rubbing will impart a brilliancy. Stains should be removed first as the chamois will not take them off. But

when there is mere dullness, nothing can be found that is better. If one is not able to obtain this, a box of rouge, such as is used by some of the foolish ones for the face, will be found of great service; only a small pinch is necessary. Some women keep their silver toilet articles brilliant by rubbing them once a week with the "pink powder" furnished by the manicurist. The basis of this is of course rouge.

One disagreeable thing with which one must contend in the washing of silverware and steel is the odor which both fish and onions leave after them, and which can only be gotten rid of by extreme care. In the case of the onions, boiling hot water with washing-soda or ammonia in it, is the only remedy so far known. Even a boiling up once in suds in which there is soda will not harm the silver and will be an advantage. For removing the odor of fish, rubbing with a cut lemon has been found very effective. If these pieces, too, are plunged into the hot soda-suds, it will be beneficial.

After the dishwashing comes the cleansing and care of the sink. It is of the utmost importance that this should be done properly. There are housekeepers who put a little soda right over the

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sieve of the sink three or four times a day, just as they happen to think of it. All the water running down, hot or cold, thus carries with it a solution of soda, and the pipes are constantly cleansed.

Once it was thought necessary to use concentrated lye for this purpose, but the plumbers have clearly demonstrated that this is not only not the best thing, but is in reality the very worst thing that can be used. Lye and grease, since time immemorial, have been used to make soap. "Hence," argued the housekeeper, "if I put lye down the pipes and then flush them, I will have them nicely washed out with soft soap and they will be thoroughly cleansed."

Up to a certain point this argument worked, but the day generally came sooner or later, when in spite of all the "nice cleansing with soft soap," the pipes refused to work. The plumber was called in and the pipe cut, when a plug of *hard* soap instead of a mass of *soft* soap was revealed—soap, to be sure, but of no desirable kind. Then came the astonishing inquiry, "Madam, have you been putting *lye* down this pipe?" And to her amazement the housekeeper learned that the tradition of her grandmothers is worse than useless; it is detrimental.

CHAPTER IX

DRESS AND SHOPPING

IN no department of domestic life is there greater scope for extravagance or for economy, no matter what the status of the family, than in that of dress.

Nor does its regulation depend entirely on *Mater Familias*; nor is it entirely a question of first cost. Though *Pater Familias* buys only twenty-five cent neckties and ten dollar suits, if he does not take care of them, he is quite as extravagant as though he bought expensive things. Dumping a coat down in a heap so that it must go to the tailor for a good pressing, is an extravagance. Undertaking some odd job which is sure to soil a pair of clean cuffs, without removing those cuffs, thus necessitating their going to the laundry, though a small item, is an unwarranted expense. Dusting shoes with a clean handkerchief when there is a brush to be had by reaching for it, is an extravagance.

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Mater Familias, when she is careless in regard to her veils so as to necessitate the purchase of two where one should have done, is extravagant if her veil cost only ten cents. (As a rule, the cheaper the article, the greater the care required.) If, instead of hanging her coat and skirt on hangers of some kind, home-made or purchased for the purpose, she throws those articles down anywhere, she is incurring an unwarranted expense, either of money or time. For, either she must spend money on the tailor, or must press them herself, when, had she been careful, there would have been need for neither.

Now let us take up the question of initial cost. "Remember," is generally advised, "that, in buying, the best is always the cheapest in the end." This advice, like the majority that is given, is capable of much adjustment. "What is worth doing at all is worth doing well," says the old-time housekeeper severely and then proceeds to hem her dish towels as she would hem a handkerchief.

With our initial purchase of material the only thing one can do is to get the very best for the money one has. I may be able to spend but ten cents per yard, you may have fifty. Well, then,

you are no better off than I if you do not obtain full value for your fifty while I do for my ten. If I have but ten cents, I must turn my back on even fifteen cent goods, for there is nothing more enervating to the shopper than "looking and longing." It uses up nerve force and vitality.

The shopping itself is such an important thing that perhaps a few words upon this special topic would not be amiss.

Some time ago, a woman wished to purchase an umbrella. She had thought it out before she went. She knew what she wanted, she knew what price she could afford. If she could not obtain the two combined, then would be the time for further debate. But being decided, she walked into the shop and addressing a salesman, said, "I want an umbrella—gloria—twenty-six inches—natural wood handle—price two dollars and a half. Have you such a thing?" "Certainly, madam," said the cheerful salesman, "cheerful" because he was not accustomed to such business-like sensible shopping; and in fifteen minutes the whole thing was done. As she left the shop, she heard a gentleman standing by say to the clerk, "*Well!* I never saw such expeditious, business-like shopping as *that* before." "No," replied the

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clerk with a sigh, "it is very rare. As a general thing they come in and say they want an umbrella. After having made this statement, we have to drag the rest out of them piecemeal by questions. What size? What material? What kind of handle? What price? And most times they don't know. It's very wearing."

One of the most important elements of shopping consists in communing with oneself a while before starting; planning margins of price, setting the "must haves" in one column and the "would likes" in another, preparing samples of goods to be matched or combined, and settling upon how much money one must or may spend. By doing this carefully, the articles upon one's list often assume different proportions where the absolute necessity for their purchase and the amount to be expended are considered.

If one be undecided, as one may be, quite legitimately, one may often depend upon the advice or judgment of the clerk. But one must be clear as to the point on which one is undecided. There must be nothing vague, or patience and nerve force are lost on both sides.

For instance, it is quite within reason for one to say to the clerk, "I am making up that goods,"

laying down the samples, "for a child of seven and I wish to combine something with it, but I do not know just what there is in the market, or just the color which would look best. She is quite dark, with black hair; perhaps you can show me some suitable remnants, a yard and a half is all I want."

The average saleswoman, addressed in this lucid way, will be interested to help her customer. Why not? Self-interest, if nothing else, would dictate such a course, but she is pleased to be pleasant, and after all, we all like the little bit of importance attached to being asked to make a decision for some one else.

When shopping, avoid buying large figures or plaids as these do not lend themselves to economical cutting. To match the different portions involves waste, and an unmatched plaid or figure is not to be tolerated in good dressmaking.

Also, avoid the general counters, if you would obtain bargains.

"Bargains!" shrieks a chorus. "There are no such things! they are a delusion for weak women who do not know any better!"

Softly, ladies, softly! I repeat, "Bargains," for bargains there be, and plenty, if one only

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know how and when to buy. It is no bargain for the housewife with slender means to buy strawberries in February at a price that would be prohibitive in June, even if they *are* "dirt cheap for winter time." It is no bargain to buy a silk that has been reduced one-half because it was so sleazy that no one would have it at the original price.

But, autumn and spring, between seasons, if one can get a start by laying out, say, even five dollars ahead of the season, one may often obtain rare bargains, lawns and other cotton goods in the autumn, wool goods in the spring. One child was the marvel of her mother's friends; she was always rather expensively dressed on very slender means, nothing markedly extravagant but good material. The secret was, let us whisper, "bargains"! When the autumn came, the mother shopped for lawns and gingham, getting the twenty-five cent quality as low as ten cents very often. At the remnant counter where she frequently found what she wanted in suitable but small quantity, they were even less. In the spring, it was the same.

"But," asserts some one, "the patterns would be old-fashioned by the time another season came around."

No, because this mother bought such patterns as are always in stock, spots, stripes, small figures. They were good for all time. Having the materials on hand, too, was a saving of hurry when the season came around. Skirts could be made, material could be tucked, sleeves could be gotten ready for the finishing, and then when the season came, there was little to do but put together the different parts which had been made ample in all directions, so that size was but a question of seams or a tuck.

Even whole garments were bought out of season at a great reduction. This is particularly the case in the spring, for wool goods are much more difficult to carry over than those of cotton or silk. So, if a coat seemed inevitable for another autumn, in March the mother began looking for "bargains." As a child's coat does not need to fit like a "princess gown," and as it is not very hard to calculate just about how much a child will grow, it is not so difficult to buy a coat in the spring, which will be just about right in the autumn. This rule, given by a physician, is a pretty good one for the mother of the average child to remember. Children increase in height from April to August; from August to Decem-

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ber they increase in weight ; and from December till April they are practically at a physical standstill. (Perhaps their brain power is growing then.)

"But are you *sure* such coats are reductions? Suppose they are some old stock being worked off on you?"

But, madam, you should know for *yourself* whether you are getting value or not. If you are not capable of judging, take some one with you on whose opinion you can place reliance.

There are, however, two instances which can be noted that should carry with them at least a little weight. One mother needed a coat for her son. She was a woman of means but did not care to pay an extravagant price. "Now, Mrs. Blank," said the salesman who knew her well as a patron, "here is a twenty-five dollar coat which you can have for fifteen. To-morrow we put the stock away till next autumn when the prices will go up again." The coat was a beauty and a great bargain at fifteen dollars, but the mother eventually decided not to buy any at all. When autumn came again, necessity compelled, and the salesman showed her exactly the same coat, asking again twenty-five dollars for it (which she

paid, as there was not another one in the shop that suited her).

In another instance, a mother said to her married daughter, "If you will need a coat for the boy, you would better get it this spring. You may find a bargain." Taking the advice, the daughter purchased for five dollars a coat that could not be had earlier in the season for less than eight. "You are lucky, madam," said the saleswoman. "To-morrow we put all our cloth goods away, so we are selling off very cheap to-day. In the autumn that would have gone back to its original price."

So you see, as these coats were bought at different shops, and after an interval of years had elapsed, the testimony seems to be in favor of "bargains"—in *coats*, at least.

At the remnant counter in the spring, the same thing holds good. A few yards for a skirt, a piece for a blouse, enough for a whole gown perhaps (if made a certain way, or trimmed with another remnant) and especially material for garments for children may often be purchased at less than two-thirds the original price. And as for colors, the difference in shade between that fashionable in the spring and that in vogue in

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autumn is almost infinitesimal. Besides if you have, at a bargain, a pretty blue-green waist that you like, what difference does it make if your next door neighbor has the latest in green-blue?

What is true of dress goods, is also true of underwear. No shopkeeper carries over stock if he can help it. It occupies room which he needs for new goods; so it goes at a sacrifice.

Even shoes have their "bargain seasons." Summer ties and slippers are very much reduced by August.

Speaking of August reminds me of one circumstance which it would be well to mention in confirmation of the wisdom of buying made-up material late in the season. One firm at the present day makes up a stock gown which is sold for thirteen dollars; in August, any of these gowns still in stock may be had for seven dollars.

Then, too, there are failures in business which throw upon the market an odd lot of goods. The enterprising shopkeeper buys up the whole stock of some one house, and runs it off at a small advance on what he has paid for it, thus getting a quick return for his outlay. When such is the case, the fact is freely advertised. No woman, who is looking to obtain the most for her

money, can afford to neglect the advertisements. Sometimes one thing, sometimes another is advertised. But let her beware of buying something she does not need, just because it is "cheap"; there is no economy in that. Let us illustrate. An advertisement gives linens at ridiculously cheap prices. Glasses for the table are what we need, but linens being advertised, we put our money into linens—bargains, real ones to be sure—but to-morrow when *glasses* are advertised at a bargain, our money is gone.

Some shops have regular "bargain days." These are a terrible crush ordinarily, and are mostly to be avoided on that account; but if one need something out of the ordinary, like a coat or a suit, something in fact that comparatively few are buying, it is well to take advantage of their offers. In fact, no woman can afford to ignore the advertisements, for shops depend on these mediums to make quick sales when they wish to clear their counters for fresh goods, and one may depend upon the advertisements of reliable houses.

Even if one be sufficiently endowed with this world's goods to afford a dressmaker, there is much economy in purchasing all the accessories

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oneself; bones, buttons, hooks and eyes, silks, cottons, etc. To be sure, most of the dressmakers do not like it, but then there are two people to be pleased, and one might as well be pleased as the other. Above all, do not trust the dressmaker to purchase trimmings, like laces and fancy braids. She will be sure to run you into some extravagance you can ill afford and you have no redress. One person was horrified to discover that her dressmaker had paid *six dollars* a *yard* for lace to trim one of her gowns. "To be sure," said the dressmaker with an ingratiating smile, "I thought maybe it *was* rather more than you had calculated on paying, but it was *so* handsome at the price and will be good all your life." She did not mention the fact that for each added dollar per yard, her per centage on the sale was increased in proportion.

If you provide your own accessories, even at the risk of being considered "mean," see that you get the "left overs." If you buy one and a half dozen bones and only fifteen are used, there are three bones due you when your dress is sent home. With half spools of silk, it is the same way. When one omits to attend to such little matters, it is no uncommon thing for these odds

and ends to be used for some one else and charged upon that customer's bill.

So it is with pieces. In a certain country town, it was the custom for one special dressmaker to ask for a yard or two more than she could use, when her customer consulted her about getting the material for a new gown. There were, of course, never anything but small scraps sent home with the finished gowns. But it was a noticeable fact that the dressmaker's little daughter was always well dressed in combinations of materials that were *like* those of her customers'. No one could accuse her, of course, but suspicion rested very strongly upon her practices.

Finally, one bright woman had an idea. Before taking her goods to the dressmaker, she weighed everything—material, lining, and trimmings. Then going to the dressmaker, she said, pleasantly: "Now, Mrs. X, I want every scrap of this material that is left."

"I always *do* send home everything that is worth while," replied Mrs. X, stiffly.

"But *you* might not think it worth while when I *would*. I want it *all*, small and large, lining bits, and everything." In time the gown was finished and sent home and when the customer

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weighed the completed garment and the left overs, even making a generous allowance for snippings and seams, she found that there was enough discrepancy to show that something had been retained. Prepared with this proof, she had a "heart to heart talk" with Mrs. X, very much to the benefit of the latter's other customers. And these same customers no longer provided the materials for the little daughter's wardrobe.

CHAPTER X

DRESS AND THE DRESSMAKER

WHILE it is not much of an economy to buy cottons by the dozen, there certainly is a saving of time and trouble in having a goodly quantity on hand. To sit down to sewing and be obliged to stop and "run out" for a spool of cotton, breaks into the continuity of work, even if only a few moments are consumed.

In country districts, where one is located some distance away from the larger towns, it is absolutely necessary to keep on hand a good supply of all the little accessories for the home dressmaker; not only because it is more convenient, but because these things can be purchased more economically in city shops than in the general stores to be found in most country places.

As most mothers, even those who are better off, do some of their own sewing, and much, if not all, of that for their children, and are, in fact,

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the home dressmakers, a few suggestions as to methods will not come amiss.

First, the planning, so as to save time.

That procrastination, which is the thief of time in every direction, certainly has a fine field in the sewing-room, if one is not careful.

The method so often resorted to, is to lay out the material ready for cutting and then look over the fashion plates. Very often, even when it is merely a question between straight or bias, a round yoke or a square one, ruffles or tucks, the decision is left until the scissors are actually in hand. Sometimes half the morning will be lost in trying to decide some trivial point.

The time to begin to study about the prospective garment is when the goods first comes to hand. One need not decide all in a moment but one at least has an opportunity of making up one's mind as to what is out of the question. This sifts matters down to a few available fashions. When a man has some all-absorbing proposition ahead of him, he does not leave all thought of details until he is ready to begin. He has them all thought out ahead of time. If a woman will do this, she will find it of great advantage. She need take time from nothing else to do it.

She may utilize the time when she is doing the week's mending or making a pie.

We have all read of the wonderful progress in mental activity which women have accomplished while they were ironing, sewing or baking. Some have learned Greek, some Latin, some this, some that, so it must be possible to do some pretty active thinking while performing some continuous household duty. Why not apply some of this brain work to planning the sewing, even if it still be far ahead?

If one has this idea in mind, other people's clothes help out wonderfully. In traveling in the street-cars or on the train, if one be alert, many a problem may be solved by noting what some one else has on. The peculiar angle of a feather, the elegant touch given by some simple trimming, the turn of a braid, the shape of a yoke, may all fall in line with one's own material and taste, so that when one is really ready to go to work there is no hesitation from lack of ideas.

Or, suppose one has a gown or hat that is beginning to look *passée*. Then is the time to look around to see what other people are wearing. Sometimes the insertion of a yoke, the rearrange-

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ment of trimming, or the alteration of sleeves will make an old gown look almost fashionable; or the exchange of a feather for a flower, or a ribbon for a wing, will so alter the appearance of a last year's hat that it passes for new.

Let us take it for granted, then, that the family dressmaker and general seamstress has her materials all in the drawer, ready for "a good day's sewing." The next thing is to arrange everything possible so that no unnecessary interruptions may occur. The patterns should have been gotten out overnight and carefully examined for any alterations that may be necessary before cutting out. For much material is wasted by recklessly cutting out a garment and then taking it off an inch or two around the bottom or trimming a seam. Possibly a larger piece could have been cut out of some special portion, had that seam been trimmed from the pattern in the beginning.

Now a word as to the keeping of patterns. *Don't*, as you value your time, your temper, and your patterns, keep them in a bag; in fact, keep nothing in a bag if you can find accommodation for it in a drawer, box, or bottle. The pattern you want is sure to be at the bottom, and over

and over again must the patterns be handled and examined, very much to their detriment. A drawer is best; next to that a box that is large enough.

Supposing, then, that the most convenient place has been assigned to your patterns, before being put away, they should be marked, not only as a whole, as "Mary's Blouse," but each piece should be marked "Front for Mary's Blouse," "Back for Mary's Blouse," etc. The exact contents of that parcel will thus be known because, so marked, there will be no possibility of mixing the parts of different patterns. It is the easiest thing in the world to mistake one part for one of the same kind belonging to another pattern. Indeed, the difference may be so slight as to be practically imperceptible; and yet that small variation may make all the difference between ruining one's garment and one's temper, and having a perfect fit.

More especially is this the case in making a skirt, for the gores do look so alike, sometimes only a shade of difference in the cut of the bottom. Having once gotten these together wrong, one is inclined to cut off the longer one to fit the shorter one, only to find that had they been re-

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versed, as was originally intended, all of the lengths would have gone together without alteration.

The patterns ready, have you a pair of medium sized scissors? If so, are they sharp? Much time is often consumed in cutting out work with scissors that are too small or dull.

A tape-measure, a yardstick, or at least a foot-rule, is an absolute necessity for the dressmaker, be she professional or amateur.

Given, then, a good pattern, good scissors, and a measuring tape, the next requisite is plenty of room. Good work is never done by bunching up the material at any point. It must be spread smoothly in all directions. If one have not a large table, the bed, or even the floor may be utilized.

The greatest care should be exercised to keep the warp of the goods running in accordance with the pattern. There are three cases when this rule may be disregarded. First, if one wishes to make a blouse bias instead of straight. In this case, the bias must be a perfect bias and all alike. It will not do to have the waist a perfect bias and the sleeves *nearly* bias because they happen to come out to greater advantage. The

bias must all be true, and, in connection with the pattern, must be treated as if it were on the straight, being careful in pinning to the pattern not to stretch the material in the least.

The next case when a slight deviation is permissible is in cutting the *under* half of a sleeve. Sometimes a little slipping will bring out perfectly this part which would otherwise have to be pieced. But this must be done with great judgment as otherwise the sleeve may pull and wrinkle. A little experience will teach how to do this.

The third case is in cutting a circular collar. In this instance, the pattern may be laid on the goods at almost any angle and the result will look well, but be very careful that the two sides are at the same angle. Otherwise, the finished work will be an eye-sore.

Now that we are on the subject, let us talk a little about cutting biases. A *true bias* is when the warp and the woof of the material are folded at direct right angles, and nothing but a *true bias* will draw and fold properly. Owing to the fact that material *is* bias, it is very difficult not to "get off the track" once in a while, by a seam or so. When this has been done two or three times

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the bias has been destroyed and there is nothing to do but retrim the goods to the proper angle and start again. (We are now referring to material that is being cut for bias folds.) When properly cut, there should be no difficulty in adjusting a fold with perfect smoothness, even on a gored skirt, for the lower edge readily stretches just the little required to fit it to the skirt. When not a true bias, if the pattern of the goods be a stripe or a plaid, the result is exceedingly ugly, a fact to which many dressmakers pay but comparatively little attention. Some years ago, when short capes were worn, the writer recalls having seen one that cost forty dollars, having been made by a modiste with a celebrated name. It was a brown broadcloth trimmed with a bias band of satin, old-gold and brown stripes. So careless had the cutting been, that while upon the right front the band was a true bias, by the time the piece was long enough to go around the cape and come up on the left front, the stripes, instead of being diagonal, were very little off of the straight.

In making up plaids, figures, and stripes, the home dressmaker is usually not nearly particular enough to make them match. This should

always be done. There is nothing that looks more "home-made" than two hems coming together so that the pattern of the material does not match. It is much better to put a little piece somewhere where it will not show, than to have such a result. The writer has seen a blue and green plaid, for instance, so cut that the left half of the waist carried the blue stripe to the edge, while the right side continued with the green.

All this kind of thing should be strictly avoided if one would have the best effect for the time and material used.

Sometimes to help out in such a strait (having only a scant quantity of material to begin with), one may make the under part of one sleeve (or both, if need be) upside down, providing the difference is not conspicuous. It is possible even to put in a small piecing that is upside down so that it will not be noticeable.

Speaking of piecing, let us say right here that it is often of the greatest service in economical cutting, especially in cutting gores for skirts. For instance, suppose our goods is but fifty-four inches wide and our pattern calls for thirty. This thirty inches will of course be needed at the bottom of the skirt mainly. What shall we do?

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Lay our pattern down on a single thickness of goods and cut out one thirty-inch gore, leaving an undesirable remnant which we may or may not be able to use?

No! we will double our goods in the fold and cut out our gores, two at a time, twenty-seven inches wide, piecing on to each a small bit where it has not quite covered the pattern. If the piecing be done deftly, the matching carefully, and the seam be well pressed *open*, it will scarcely show; and our goods will have been used to the best advantage.

For simple print morning skirts, one does not even need a pattern, as, with a little experience, one may fold the material so that gores may be cut, always, however, remembering the general rule that the front width needs to be five and one-half inches at the top and eleven at the bottom. The next two gores should also be five and one-half inches at the top.

The best way to learn all this is to cut newspaper into the required lengths, and fold and fold and fold, until a desirable result is obtained for the gores, for experience and experiment are worth much more than theoretical teaching. After all, home sewing is, like any other branch

of domestic science, a question of common sense, ingenuity, and experience. Hard and fast rules do not always accomplish what is intended for them.

Proper pinning and basting are two of the greatest elements in success. The pins should be placed smoothly and firmly in the goods, no puckers being allowed. Blunt pins punch undesirable holes in the goods; pins that are too large do the same; pins that are too small slip out. The best pins for the purpose are the long slender steel ones with white or black heads. These being rather expensive, however, to use lavishly and lose, as one *does* lose pins in sewing, an economical pin and one that cannot be surpassed, is that made from a needle with a broken eye. If you have not among the accessories of your work-basket a small vial with a netted top, intended exclusively for broken needles, it would be a convenience to arrange one at once. From time to time if you will take out all the needles broken only at the eye, and will give them a sealing-wax head, you will soon have a collection of the finest pins to be had for pinning work and pattern together.

When it comes to attaching the different pieces

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of the garments together, except for a first trial, be very chary of depending on pins. Basting is the only satisfactory way; and the rule for basting, given by a teacher of the art of dressmaking, is: "Use a rather coarse thread in a needle as small as will carry it without pulling" (and you will be surprised to find how small an eye will take a coarse thread) "and take small stitches." The philosophy of this is apparent. The finer thread does not hold with sufficient firmness and the pieces, while not actually separating, will pull in the fitting. When this is the case, it is almost impossible to tell truly about the fit of the garment and the goods may very often be pinned.

Regular basting-thread on large spools may be purchased, and is considerably cheaper in the end than ordinary cotton. In buying this, however, be sure to select a make that is free from knots and rough places.

The thing which adds the needed touch of grace, however, and without which all garments look "dowdy" no matter who has made them, is proper pressing. Some seams do not need dampening but all should be pressed with a heavy iron. While working, the goods should be kept as smooth as possible, so that little pressing of the

body of the material is necessary. But hems and seams of skirts, waists, and coats should receive the greatest care. In the case of coats it is well to turn the work over to a tailor if possible. He will probably charge from fifty to seventy-five cents, but the skilled labor may make all the difference between a "home-cut" and a "tailor-made."

The pressing should not be left until the garment is finished, it should go on all the time. For instance, before the back seam of the skirt is sewed up, all the rest should be pressed. Whether these should be pressed open or closed, depends upon the out of the skirt. After the back seam is sewed it should be pressed before attempting to hang the gown. It is impossible to make an accurate turning at the bottom unless all are properly pressed. When the hem has been turned and the edge basted in, it is often well to press in just the crease at the bottom as this enables the worker to put in the second basting with greater ease. Every little pieced seam should be pressed before another part be applied to it.

In pressing the waist, the back seams should be pressed before this is applied to the fronts. If assured that the shoulder seams are right, they

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may be sewed up and pressed before the under arm seams are closed. All this adds to the ease because it leaves a flat surface with which to work. If it be necessary to sew up the entire waist before shoulders or under arms can be pressed, the waist should be turned wrong side out and the arms-eye slipped over the corner of the pressing board. By a little turning and smoothing, one may then have a flat surface. Many people try to press by putting the iron *inside* of the waist, but they never can obtain the same purchase and pull on the seams that they can if the wrong-side-out method be used.

In dealing with sleeves, the front seam, which is, of course, sewed up first, should be pressed before the back is closed. After that has been done, an ugly job is at hand, that of pressing the back seam with very little space to work in. The difficulty may be obviated by having on hand a piece of stick, say a broom handle, about twenty inches long. Roll around this a thickness or two of flannel (do not make too soft, no board for pressing should be soft, as that defeats the object). Turn the sleeve wrong side out and slip the seam-stick in. After the back seam has been finished, the entire sleeve should have a good

pressing as it is to be again turned. When turned run the iron around inside of the top of the sleeve as far as may be done without creasing or wrinkling.

Tucks should receive a double pressing, one when flat out on the board, and another when laid down on the goods.

If all these rules be carefully observed the finished product of the home dressmaker will be a delight, and she will very soon be able to detect in the clothes of others when this work has been improperly done or omitted altogether.

CHAPTER XI

CLOTHES FOR THE LITTLE ONES

It may be economical, and doubtless is so, to make children's clothes so much too large that room is allowed for growth in all directions, but it is rather hard on the child when this fact is obvious. Have you never had occasion to pity children whom you have seen, with sleeves down over their knuckles, a coat two sizes too large, or skirts two or three inches too long. "Oh, Mary grows so," says the mother, impatiently or plaintively, according to temperament, "that I *have* to make her clothes large. If I didn't I should be making new ones all the time." (And to hear her, one might imagine that in taking on growth, Mary was doing a most reprehensible thing indeed.)

Of course, one must make children's clothes large, but there are ways of doing it without making the little one ridiculous.

Let us consider the matter. Children, as a rule, grow very fast. The first thing the mother

knows, sleeves are away up the arms, petticoat waists will not button, and skirts are too short for protection. To remedy this is a simple matter. When making the waists, cut them two inches too long and two inches too large around. After the garment is finished, lay, by hand, an inch tuck all around the waist, just above where it is attached to the skirt. A half-inch tuck either side of the waist hem will regulate the size around. As becomes necessary, these tucks may be let out, and as they are laid by hand, it is but the work of a moment to clip a stitch and pull out the thread.

Skirts may be regulated in three ways: by tucks, by a specially deep hem, or by the insertion of some trimming later on. If the skirt to be adjusted in the last way be of wash material, the trimming would better be half-worn or at least laundered, as there will then be no shrinkage.

This method, as well as a fourth suggestion which follows, involves some sewing, while the first two do not. This fourth suggestion is that if the dress be made with a belt, both skirt and waist shall be brought under the belt its full width. When lengthening is necessary, the belt

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may be ripped off and set between the two, making a difference of a good two inches. The chief objection to making dresses in this way is that, on account of the extra thicknesses under the belt, they are hard to iron dry. If thin material be used, however, this is not a serious objection.

Sleeves are often a problem, but they can be regulated without very much trouble. If the dress is a slip for morning, nothing is simpler than merely tucking the sleeve after it is made. Three half-inch tucks will probably be sufficient to add length as long as the garment lasts.

If the dress be a better one, the difficulty may be obviated by making a very deep seam (say an inch) at the shoulder (which permits length added to both shoulder and sleeve) or to set the shoulder down on the sleeve, permitting the extra length of the sleeve to act as a binding for the arms-eye. The former method, however, is the simpler, as by merely taking another seam and then ripping out the old one, one may add any desired length in a few moments. The latter method requires the sleeve to be entirely ripped out and inserted afresh, which every seamstress knows is a perfect nuisance.

In the little drawers, both in the body and in

the legs, tucks may be laid which can be ripped as the child grows; and in the bands, front and back, plaits may be taken.

Even the woven garments, which must be purchased ready made, may be bought a size too large and have their sleeves and legs tucked. The body being too large makes no difference.

Thus may the child be kept looking trim and trig at very little cost of time or trouble.

Speaking of woven garments, they are one thing in providing which much real economy may be practiced. When the garments of the older portion of the family get beyond wear, do not convert them into house-cloths until they have been well examined. Sometimes a little shirt may be made for the small baby from a pair of large sleeves, the ribbed portion being almost long enough for the sleeves of the new garment. If you have never tried it, you will be surprised to see how much can be done with a discarded adult undervest, for it takes so little for the wee one. These new garments will not be "regular made." If they are nice and warm, that is all one wants. They are more easily made if left open all the way down (the hems being faced with muslin that has been well shrunk)

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and fastened with small buttons. They should be made by hand to prevent the seams drawing and all seams should be laid open and catstitched.

When it comes to the stockings, something may be done here also to relieve the situation. Besides reënforcing the heels and toes with darning cotton (a plan pursued by our grandmothers which is just as valuable in our day as it was in theirs) one may reënforce the knees. This can be done without making the fact noticeable; and it not only gives something to darn to when the inevitable hole appears, but it puts the evil day afar off, and prevents the hole showing much when it does appear if it cannot be at once mended.

The method is simple. Take a piece of material matching in color and weave, and of such a depth that it will come well down over the knee. After it has been attached to the hem at the top, it should be long enough to go all the way round the leg and should first be fastened to the seam in the back down its entire depth. Then a second attaching to the stocking for the entire depth of the piece, about an inch and a half either side of the seam, will keep it in place without sewing it around the bottom edge. The latter could hardly be done without showing; the former will

never be noticed. The little knee bones are so sharp that they soon cut through the stocking web, but this extra piece acts as a sort of padding. The leather knee-protectors that children sometimes wear are an excellent safeguard but very ugly, so that they are really not available except for morning play. If the children have no such protectors, the mother can make a very acceptable substitute from cloth. If these have a piece of elastic attaching the two ends, going back of the knee, they are easily slipped on and off.

While we are on the subject of stockings, why not say a few words on darning? For this *will* turn up, just about once a week unfailingly. The dreaded task is not so hard if gone about rightly.

In the first place (now this may sound strange), a hole is never quite so large as it looks. In the wash it had become stretched and out of shape. If, then, instead of stretching it still further over the egg it is humored a little, the edges being smoothed out and pulled gently toward each other, it will diminish perceptibly in size.

The next thing is to find out in which direction it has worn the most. Some holes by a little

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manipulation can be reduced to a mere slit. When this is the case, with ordinary fine sewing cotton, draw the slit evenly together, not with overcasting, but like lacing a shoe. This can then be darned neatly, and it will never be noticed by the wearer if fine darning cotton is used. Why do women use a cord nearly as thick as wrapping yarn to darn a material which is woven of the finest web? There is no doubt that many an adult can lay the blame of corns upon the outrageous darns with which his feet were tortured in childhood.

If the large hole be round, its dimensions can be materially lessened by a fine overcasting, which should be drawn up as tight as possible short of puckering.

Lastly, if a stocking has reached the point where large darns cannot be avoided, it is far better to insert a new piece taken from the top of an old one. An entire new sole can be inserted in this way, or just new toes, and if the seams are laid flat and catstitched down, they will cause no discomfort to the wearer.

An old pair of stockings, with the feet all gone, presents a number of possibilities. Apart from making nice soft cloths for household uses, those

belonging to adults may be cut down into stockings for the smaller feet, and will wear almost as long as new ones. When long woolen stockings were worn by an adult member of the family, one mother kept her children in pretty, neatly fitting mittens made from the legs. They were of a beautiful fine weave, and when carefully cut to fit the child and closely sewed, they presented the appearance of a fine grade of bought mittens. She was careful to cut them so that the ribbed top was brought around the child's wrist. And they looked very "smart" indeed, as our English sisters would say. Every one admired them, and many inquired where they were to be purchased.

When it comes to "making over" outside garments for the smaller ones, considerable thought should be expended before the cutting out begins. The material should be most critically examined for spots, stains and worn places and should be held up to the light for moth-holes. Around each suspicious spot, one of which might miss the eye when laying on the pattern, should be run a thread of contrasting color, black on white, white on almost all others.

Good material should come under the arms

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and the under part of the sleeves. A worn place, a spot, or even a darned moth-hole may be made to come up in the gathers or under a plait. Sometimes trimming will disguise a multitude of imperfections, or a simple line of embroidery will cover up moth-holes. One of the prettiest little coats ever made was of gray cloth with a vine and leaves embroidered in soft gray shades. Only to the initiated were the moth-holes known that were concealed under many of the leaves. The coat was generally conceded to be very handsome.

After all, the making of children's clothes is an art in itself, entirely apart from that of dress-making for adults. And each mother, if she put into the work the heart and thought and love which are required for success, will have no doubt as to the ultimate good result. The great trouble is that the underlying thought is, "Oh, it's only for one of the children, so what does it matter?" It matters a great deal for the credit of the mother if not for the feelings of the child.

Darning and piecing are two most important considerations in the work of making over, as well as in repairing, and every mother should set

herself the task of learning them. They do not come by instinct but by hard work and experience.

Piecing is best done with a fine overseam, taking as little of the cloth on the needle as possible. The seams should be laid back and basted down with exactness and then the two sides be basted together closely, before a stitch of the overseaming is taken. By this means, the sewing can be watched and the sewer knows to a thread just how the two sides are being matched together. If the material be sewed in an ordinary seam, only one side can be seen at a time.

The first essential of darning cloth is that the piece underneath shall not deviate by a thread from the weave of the garment. It should first be pinned on and then basted, on the wrong side of course. To aid in this, it is well to place the garment over a board of some kind which will take pins, and spread out the material directly around the hole, stretch it taut and perfectly straight, and fasten it firmly to the board with eight pins stuck straight in. This gives an absolutely firm, smooth surface. The rest is comparatively plain sailing.

There are conflicting directions as to the pro-

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ceedings for the actual darning, but the following method has proved most satisfactory to many.

When all is ready basted, clip the dress material all around quite close to the edges of the hole. Then with threads drawn from a spare piece of goods, darn back and forth all *around* the hole, taking in each time only a small area of the old and just catching the new material. When all is done, clip again as close as possible. After such a darn as this has been pressed *hard*, on the wrong side, its detection will be most difficult.

CHAPTER XII

ENTERTAINING

To the young housekeeper who has been accustomed to the spaces and accessories of her mother's home, entertaining alone, in her limited quarters and with her slender purse, often presents a problem so gigantic as to be almost without reasonable solution. Yet, entertain she must, and she struggles and struggles, trying to keep up to old standards and vying with her neighbors till the result is a physical breakdown or an empty purse when money should be forthcoming for necessities.

The trouble is, she begins in the wrong place. She is trying to *begin* where her mother has *left off*. Years and years ago, when her mother was her age, she, too, tried to do this thing, and learned by experience that she was all wrong. When this lesson had been thoroughly acquired, she began to entertain easily and well upon her limited income.

Let us see! Where shall we begin to discuss, in

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all its bearings, a question which seems to possess so many vital points? Suppose we start with the guest-chamber?

The time has gone by when it is considered vital that the guest of a night must have the best room in the house while the wife, who must occupy it all the time, shall have the meanest and most inconvenient. With this idea in mind, after the question of rooms has been adjusted, comes the question of furnishing.

Here is often the great stumbling-block, because many do not altogether realize that a guest needs *comfort* rather than elegance (and, if the means be *very* limited, something like a special table or a footstool may be carried into the guest-chamber during its temporary occupancy, from that of the mistress of the house).

The articles that are absolutely necessary for the *comfort* of the guest are a dressing-table with mirror (a bureau if possible for this purpose as affording drawers); a small table for books, candle and conveniences; an easy chair, a standing chair, a footstool; a bed with a comfortable mattress; and a wash-stand. Just what this furniture shall be as to quality rests entirely with the housekeeper. Comfortable guest-cham-

bers have been furnished, apart from the bed, at an expense not exceeding five dollars (as described previously under the chapter on furnishing); and they have been made to cost five hundred.

The accessories of this room may be added to at any moment and to almost any extent. But the wash-stand should be furnished with a toilet set, complete, the soap receiver holding an absolutely new cake of soap for each new guest. There is nothing which more greatly lacks daintiness than the serving up, so to speak, of the same cake of soap to several succeeding guests. By reason of the frequent thoughtlessness in this respect, many who travel or visit much carry their own soap with them; but it is the business of the hostess to see that her guest-chamber is supplied with this convenience. Soaps with a strong scent are to be excluded. To many, a pronounced fragrance is most objectionable. To many skins, also, Castile soap in any form is an irritant. But there is a bland violet soap to be had to which no one can well object. The scent, being hardly stronger than orris-root, is delicious and delicate.

And going a little further into the question of scents, bed linen that is kept in lavender is most

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refreshing and adds a touch of elegance to the furnishing of the bed. A bureau drawer with a suggestion of orris (which is like the most ethereal violet) or of rose-leaves, is a delightful place to tuck away one's belongings for a few days. Rose-leaves dried and put in a drawer for two or three successive seasons, removing the old and putting in fresh ones as the season goes on, will so permeate the wood that the fragrance will always remain a delicate, faint scent. Over ten years ago, a Jacqueminot was enclosed in a small wooden box. To-day, though the leaves were thrown away long, long ago, that box still breathes out the soul of that one glorious rose, and it is used as a receptacle for handkerchiefs which come from it with an exquisite freshness that is a delight.

So if our young housekeeper be in position to do so, if she will shake rose-leaves into her bureau drawers or sprinkle orris-root in them liberally and cover the bottom with pretty tissue-paper, she will give an added but inexpensive pleasure to her guest.

In these days of tissue and crêpe papers in beautiful tints and decorative designs, they may be used with great effect in the guest-chamber,

particularly at special seasons. A holly set for Christmas, for instance. Bear in mind always, that it is the thoughtfulness shown and the effect produced which count,—not the money expended. Instead of the conventional wrapping-paper which is apt to be found covering the bottoms of bureau drawers, why not, at a small expense, put, instead, some tissue-paper of a tint in consonance with the color scheme of the room? Even a row of the pretty Japanese napkins with their dainty flower designs would not be a bad idea by any means.

On the little stand should be a candle and matches, in case the guest wishes to make a light in the night, unless it be provided with a small lamp, in good order, by which a sleepless guest may read if so desiring. But *matches*, by all means.

It is a courtesy, but not a necessity, to add a box of writing-paper and envelopes with a blotting-pad, ink and pens as well as an ordinary pencil pad with a nicely sharpened pencil. One guest in twenty may not need these, as most people carry such things with them. But if they do the articles are there; and if not required, they add to the homelike aspect of the room. A

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small vase, if containing only a single flower, gives the last needed touch.

Before the guest retires for the night, a pitcher of drinking water and a glass should be provided. Further, if possible, a glass of milk and a plate of crackers or a tin of biscuit should be proffered. Some people do not believe in eating before they go to bed. These may refuse your hospitality. But there are many more who, lying wakeful at night, might sleep if they had some light food to eat.

If a guest be staying in the house for some little time, unless it be an exceptional case, it is a mistake to think that she wishes to be entertained all the time. In fact, to some it is very fatiguing to have every moment taken up with being amused. Almost every one likes a little time during each day to herself. There are letters to write and books to read and naps to take. How exhausting it is, just as one has planned for an hour's rest, to be hurried into a change of gown and taken for a drive. Of course, if there be but a short time to "do things" one wishes to crowd in all one can, but as a general thing guests enjoy being let alone once in a while. The hostess owes this to herself also. Just be-

cause one is enjoying the company of an old friend for a few days, there is no need for one to come out of the process "worn to a frazzle," as they say in the South, with trying to combine a life of solid amusement with the duties as house-keeper. Both guest and hostess should come out of the visit refreshed, but very often the hostess is utterly exhausted.

Give what you can comfortably and with pleasure, so that the guest may know you are enjoying it as much as she is, and let it go at that.

The whole matter was put upon its true basis by a cultured woman in describing a visit she had recently enjoyed.

"One of the pleasantest visits I ever paid," said she, "was when I spent three days in the home of a former maid of mine, who had married a young farmer. With much timidity, she had extended me a most cordial invitation, and being in the neighborhood, I went. She could not have done better for me had she moved in the highest circles of society. I was not disturbed in the morning until I chose to rise, at which time the best the farm afforded was at my service—cream, new-laid eggs, fresh butter, de-

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licious home-made bread. Later in the day when she could do so conveniently, she harnessed the horse to her pretty little carriage, and I was taken all through the beautiful country of which her husband's farm formed a part. In the evening a phonograph was set going for my amusement. For the rest of the day I was allowed to dispose of my time as I chose. My bedroom, with its homely comfort, was all that I needed. A new cake of soap, snowy towels, and fresh water were there. At night I was offered fruit or milk or biscuit as I preferred before retiring.

“John says to me, ‘We ought to have a new carpet in the parlor before Mrs. Blank comes.’ But I says to him, ‘Mrs. Blank knows we are poor folks and you know we can’t afford a new carpet now. She’s a real lady, and she’ll be glad to take our best as we can give it and welcome, and she wouldn’t thank us for doing something that would make her visit a burden.’”

“This is what she confided to me during one of our drives. I cannot tell you how pleased I was to know that in this simple heart was the discernment to see that I was a ‘real lady’ who knew enough to receive hospitality as it was meant.”

So much for hospitality. Now let us consider the guests.

Naturally this brings us to the question of invitations. As you value your peace of mind, and the contents of your slender purse, don't, in the exuberance of delight in being able to play hostess all by yourself, give *general* and *unlimited invitations*. This "come-to-see-us-any-time-we're-always-glad-to-see-you" invitation which, while it deters some who never go anywhere (and very properly) unless a time has been specified, gives a license to others that may prove not only inconvenient but absolutely disastrous. One family, moving into a new neighborhood, gave this kind of invitation to relatives and friends with the result that in the first month they had thirty visitors who remained anywhere from one meal to three days!

This hospitality established such a delightful reputation for them that any relative who was traveling from Maine to Florida or from California to Louisiana, *some* way managed to "stop over." People with a claim, people without a claim upon their hospitality, no difference did it make, until one of the family who was a business woman declared she never knew whom she was

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likely to find at the house when she went home at night.

One day, she and a brother sat down to consider matters and they found that they had "given" (this is not a pleasant word but there seems no other way to put it) twenty-one meals the week before—sometimes two at a meal, sometimes one, sometimes three, but twenty-one in all. Not only this special week but many more had they practically boarded one more in the family. This did not cover all the bad features of the case, for the influx of uninvited guests made it impracticable to invite those they most wished. Indeed, at one time, when four were invited to dinner, two more appeared almost at the last moment, uninvited, and, discovering that there was a dinner party on hand, instead of going home as most others would have done, congratulated themselves upon being able to meet people whom they had not seen for so long!

So this hospitable family called a halt. No more come-to-see-us-any-time invitations were extended. It was "Come to lunch such a day," or "We are at home Friday afternoons. Can you not come then? We are never sure at any other time;" and finally the hint was taken and the im-

position (for such it became) ceased. On Wednesdays, in turn, the family had the privilege of bringing home some unexpected guest, but for the rest of the time the old practice of having uninvited visitors was discontinued. Much hospitality was dispensed, but those who came had been asked.

So much for warning as to what not to do, now for what we may do, for there is much most delightful entertaining that may be done at a minimum expense.

First and simplest come "afternoons." These need no specially sent invitation. The day, as "Thursday afternoon," on one's visiting card is all that is required to let one's friends know. Wherever the card is left, the fact is proclaimed. If special notice is required as, for instance, to a person passing through the town, or a man upon whom a woman would not call, the enclosing of such a card would be equivalent to an invitation. The "afternoon" need not even be engraved on the visiting card for such a function. If written by the hostess in the lower left-hand corner, it will be quite as well. Then a "come-to-see-me-Thursday-afternoon-I'm-always-at-home-to-my-friends-then" invitation given to such as the host-

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ess really would specially like to see, covers the ground for the rest. One hostess who was extremely busy but was troubled with many people "dropping in" at most inopportune times, announced at the beginning of the next season, smiling gaily the while, that she was going to be *very* busy this coming winter, and nobody need come to see her for anything until after four o'clock, and probably she wouldn't be at home then; but she *would* be "at home" all day to her friends on Fridays.

Consequently, a quantity of time which during previous seasons had been literally flittered away, was disposed of to her advantage, and now no one comes to see her before four o'clock except on the most urgent business. She has her time to herself instead of being at the beck and call of every idle acquaintance who stops in "just for a few words" and stays for a couple of hours.

What shall a hostess provide for such afternoons? Only the simplest things are necessary, tea and biscuits, if she so desires, but her service must be dainty. Lemon, cream and sugar (cut squares) should accompany the tea. She may even use only Japanese paper napkins (these are quite permissible for such an informal function)

but napkins of *some* kind she should have. There should be a service plate, a teacup and saucer, and a napkin for each guest. There need be no "waiting," if she has no maid and does not wish to go to the expense of hiring one for the afternoon. But, if she has no alcohol teakettle, her teakettle in the kitchen should be boiling all the time, so that she can slip out for a moment at any time and replenish the tea. Callers will probably come a few at a time, two or three possibly, perhaps only one, and she will have time, as one set leaves, to run out to the kitchen and start afresh for the new set. If not, no one minds, at such an informal function, if the hostess leaves the room a minute. With a maid, of course, the whole matter is simplicity itself.

Next to this in the way of small entertaining, is the "informal" afternoon tea, when some special day is set. This is a delightful, easy and inexpensive way of entertaining a small number of one's most intimate friends, either for some special occasion or just because one wishes to. If one has a guest for a day or two and even a small dinner is not convenient (and would not in any way cover the ground because one's guest could meet only such a small number of one's friends),

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an informal tea is a charming way of entertaining. A simple, informal invitation is sent giving day and hour and "to meet Miss ——." Or a visiting card may serve the purpose on which is written "Informal tea to meet Miss ——." Twenty or twenty-five invitations will give a delightful afternoon. One hostess gives three or four of these simple functions every winter, sending out only twenty invitations each time. The guests that could not come to the last one are invited to the next one, and so she reaches all her friends and acquaintances, never overcrowds her rooms, and everybody has a good time.

What does she serve? Just a *little* more elaborate menu than that for "afternoons" that are not specified. Sandwiches, small cakes, and coffee or chocolate—that is all. She contends that people do not come to eat; that is merely incidental. They come to see each other. The eating and drinking lend sociability to the occasion.

That her theory is the true one may be proved by the manner in which one family entertained in Washington. They had fallen into very straightened circumstances and while they did not parade the fact, they made no pretensions to anything. They knew they were well-born

and well-bred and for the rest, they did their best. When the season came around their "afternoons" were again a feature of their daily life. For refreshments they served, what? On the buffet was a silver basket full of apples! Only that, nothing more. Plates, knives and napkins were at hand, but the apples were all there was to eat. They were too truly *ladies*, in the best sense of the word, to do aught but offer such hospitality as they could, in the most gracious manner, without seeming to feel any difference between the present and the past. And in all Washington there were no parlors more crowded with the best and the wealthiest and the most "worth while," than in that little apartment on—well, never mind the street they lived on.

Let the fact be emphasized that *false pride* is one of the greatest enemies that is known to truly economical living; and more particularly in entertaining. If a hostess be willing to give what she can, consulting her own purse rather than that of her neighbor, feeling no humiliation when she invites the wealthy to partake of her simple fare, receiving all with equal courtesy, she is a charming hostess.

For after all, it is the gracious and genial spirit,

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the cordial manner, rather than the component parts of the menu, that constitute the real hospitality.

Big dinners, except as family affairs or a public function, are practically a thing of the past, the small dinner of from four to eight, and the lunch, taking their place. One hostess of repute declares that eight covers makes an ideal table; even ten is too many. She gives many dinners during a season for she has much means at her command, but they are all small, and never include the same people. She invites a carefully chosen few who will be congenial and her functions all go off without a hitch.

But neither much means nor many servants are needed to make such affairs delightful. The great idea is being *ready beforehand* and not attempting more than can be accomplished without making the guests uncomfortable. This last sentence perhaps needs a little illustration. A hostess was once extremely indignant at a man guest, because, after he and his wife had been there to dine, he announced to some one who had no more feeling than to tell his hostess, that he was never going there to dinner again as he did not like to sit down at the table with a hostess who was all

red in the face and hot. (She had no maid and prepared everything herself.) While he was unkind to make the remark and the person who told her was more so, there was justice in what he said. For the time that she indignantly told the story was the occasion of having two women friends to lunch. From soup to finish, there was enough on the table for an elaborate formal lunch. Never once did *she* sit down comfortably with her guests. They practically ate their meal *alone* and she waited on them. It was her pleasure to "feed them," for that is about all it amounted to, but they certainly were extremely uncomfortable. Had they desired to lunch alone, they could have gone to a restaurant where a hireling, not a dear friend, would have waited on them. They would have been pleased had she provided an omelet and baked potatoes, or frizzled beef, or scrambled eggs or anything which she could have prepared comfortably, and then have sat down in equal comfort with her guests.

So again, I say, what you cannot prepare for and do beforehand, so that the skeleton of the household mechanism is not evident to the guests, do not attempt to have. An instance of the latter method can be given. A housekeeper, having

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but one maid, decided to have a family dinner at Thanksgiving. This included fifteen covers. She expected to hire two maids whom she knew, as waitresses, but *only* as waitresses. The rest she and her one maid were to do. The one maid was somewhat skeptical. She "didn't see how it was going to be done." The mistress did, having begun in *September* to think it out. One by one, she took up the details in some leisure moment—riding down-town for instance—and would jot down the result of her meditations. She even decided which dishes she would use for what, and everything went off without a hitch and without her maid being overworked in the preparation. (She had, of course, two waitresses in.) A few of the details are as follows : Cranberries stewed on Saturday, sweet potatoes (they were to be browned in the oven) boiled and peeled the day before; filling for turkey made on Wednesday and set away in a cool place; celery entirely prepared the evening before, thrown into cold water, and set where it would not freeze; hominy set on the back of the stove to swell slowly all night Wednesday, etc. For three or four days previously, as mistress or maid had a little time, some little thing was done. While the maid was waiting

for something to brown on Monday, for instance, she crumbed the bread for the filling. The mistress saw that every dish and plate was in proper condition, and on Wednesday evening, on a table put in the kitchen for the purpose, they were placed in proper and convenient piles, clearly marked with a slip of paper in good round letters—"Soup," "Fish," "Cranberries," "Salted almonds," etc.—so that when the time for serving came, no questions were needed. Cook and waitresses could go ahead with no confusion.

She carried out the same idea on another occasion when she gave a lunch of twelve covers. At this function her own maid did the waiting while some one else did the serving. But everything was made ready and overseen by the mistress as far as possible before she went up-stairs to dress. The salad she arranged upon the plates with her own hands; likewise she herself prepared the grape-fruit, serving it daintily in champagne glasses with a preserved cherry in the centre of each.

The success of a lunch depends largely upon its daintiness, and upon the originality of decoration or on the manner of preparing the food. Though salads and sandwiches are old-time

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dishes, a new way of presenting them will lend a charm that nothing else can give. Therefore, when intending to have a function of this kind, do not try to remember what Mrs. A had upon her table or how Mrs. B decorated hers, but expend your thought upon something original.

Originality in place-cards is always a great point, especially if the cards make conversation beyond "How pretty!" or "What a good idea!" Recently at a small Thanksgiving dinner, the place-cards were the regulation "Thanksgiving Postals"; but the hostess had addressed each one to a guest and in the space for the message had written an apt quotation, with the name of the author. For one who had recently entered upon a career in which she was much interested was written:

"Her heart is in her work, and the heart
Giveth grace unto every art."

—*Longfellow.*

For one who was a worker in the literary field, she wrote:

"None but an author knows an author's cares,
Or Fancy's fondness for the Child she bears."

—*Cowper.*

And so on, all around the table, each quotation an excellent "hit," affording amusement and starting conversation.

After the cards had been written and addressed, the husband of the hostess had taken them to the post-office where they were duly stamped and the stamp canceled, so that they were genuine missives "through the mail."

In entertaining, let every hostess remember that if anything goes wrong she must pretend not to see it. She must not look worried when chicken salad is dropped on her new rug, or her dainty Limoges cup is broken. Her aim must be to make her guests entirely comfortable and this she cannot do if she herself appear nervous or distracted.

CHAPTER XIII

WITH THE HOME CHEF

IF it was true in the time of the Preacher that "Of making many books there is no end," how much truer is it in this, our own day. And not altogether the least of these as to number are the cook-books. Any woman, if she be inclined to give time and thought to it, can become an expert cook. It is necessary only to observe others and to follow exactly the recipes she finds in some reliable book, beginning with the simpler ones and not permitting herself to be carried away by ambition.

But the test of the cook is her method of dealing with "left-overs." It is little trouble to boil or stew or roast a piece of meat from the butcher or some vegetables fresh from the shop or the garden; but after they have been partially consumed, will she know how to make what remains attractive?

As a rule the woman living in the country, where farm products are plentiful, is less eco-

nomical in providing for the table than is her city sister. In many a country home the table is supplied so bountifully, that much of the food is not eaten and either goes to waste or appears again and again on the table in its original form. Frequently in the summer-time some of this surplus food, instead of having been prepared for the table, might have been dried, pickled, or canned and put away for winter use.

How to use "left-overs" to the best advantage is a very important question.

It is customary, we believe, in discoursing on this subject with a view to instructing the young housekeeper, to use first of all as an illustration the bread-pudding. Yet in reality, bread-pudding has in its make-up nothing whatever to recommend it, from an economical standpoint. To make it, eggs, butter, milk, and sugar are necessary, and a good fire to bake it.

As with these ingredients many delectable dishes may be made first-hand, and as the pudding requires only a few slices of stale bread or a cupful of crumbs at the most in the way of left-overs, where is the economy? Why not convert the bread into toast or crumbs for frying? It will readily be seen that bread-pudding, however

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good it may be as a dessert, as an *economical* proposition is of little value.

True economy in the use of left-overs involves the making over of those ingredients into something necessary and attractive, without the addition of other important articles. Therefore, to dry scraps of bread, and roll them for future use in breading meats, etc., is true economy, for nothing else is needed to convert the stale bread into a necessary commodity which would otherwise have to be bought. These crumbs will keep for weeks if properly packed away from the air, in glass jars. From day to day the amount may be added to—a biscuit to-day, a crust to-morrow—till almost unconsciously the jar is filled. It will not be necessary to roll each small quantity as soon as dried, but the drying process should be gone through with each day to keep the bits from growing mouldy. Once a week will be often enough to roll them. If, when wishing to crush them, the pieces seem to have softened a little, a few minutes' drying out will crisp them again.

The left-overs of fruit and vegetables are often a problem to the young housekeeper until she has learned to deal with them successfully. When she has acquired this art, many a dollar

will be saved. But remember, thrift can be purchased only at the price of eternal vigilance.

Let us take the question of fruits. A pot of jam so often "comes in handy" that it seems curious that more houses do not have them, particularly when they are so easily obtained. Preserving, in the eyes of many housekeepers, means but one thing—a day set apart for the sacred ceremony, to which all else gives way. But many and many a pot of jam or jelly may find its way to the preserve shelves with little or no loss of time. A little of this or that fruit put into a small agate pan with sugar and a little water is turned into a jam almost while it takes to tell it, and next winter when something is needed, there it is, all ready to hand.

Let us illustrate, for one instance will do.

A basket of grapes has been bought. These should be carefully examined at once and all the loose and semi-loose ones should be taken out, leaving only perfect bunches. Otherwise, those which are broken and oozing juice will soon spoil the good ones. Those that must be removed from the bunches should be taken off with a pair of scissors to prevent bruising any of the others. From those left on the plate all the

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ones that are merely broken or have slipped from the stem may be selected and thrown into an agate pan with water enough to cover them. They should then be scalded. "Scalding" means letting come to a boil. They are now saved from spoiling and can be allowed to stand for a day or two if preferred till others may be added. But if there be enough to make a glass or two of jam, it will be well to attend to it at once by mashing the mass through a sieve, adding sugar (three-quarters of a cupful of sugar to a cupful of juice) and boiling until it shows signs of "jelling."

Here you have a clear gain. If those grapes had been left as they were, the loose ones would have spoiled many of the others and the broken ones would have been of no service.

In the season of berries, a quart of vinegar put into an open-mouthed jar will be found an excellent receptacle for odd berries now and again—a saucerful from supper last night or a handful that were perfectly good but too soft to put on the table. When the season is past, there we are with a jar of berry vinegar ready for the making.

Berry vinegars are, of course, not a necessity in economical housekeeping, but if one wants

them, this is an economical way to make them. And many a time they will be found very useful in entertaining in a simple fashion, taking the place of more expensive refreshments; or, in times of illness they will be grateful as a drink.

A freezer, too, is regarded by many housekeepers as an economy rather than a luxury. One housekeeper, known to the writer, was accustomed once a week to put into her freezer everything she had left over in the way of fruits, cooked or raw—a few peaches, a little jelly, a saucer of preserves—adding to the mixture after it had been well macerated two or three glasses of lemonade or the juice of an orange or two and a little water. She did not even hesitate to put in apple sauce. And you would have been surprised at the deliciousness of the mixture she would turn out after the proper amount of freezing.

But freezing is not a necessity by any means, for another way to utilize left-over fruits for dessert is to cut them fine, sugar lightly, and set away to get very cold. Oranges, bananas, pears, apples, pineapples, peaches (either raw or canned), strawberries, white grapes, figs, and various preserved fruits may be used together in any com-

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bination. Fruits may also be dressed as a salad and are thus by many considered delicious.

Where a family likes salads these will be found a great source of economy in disposing of odds and ends of vegetables. Cold beans of any kind, green or otherwise, peas, beets, spinach, etc., laid attractively upon a few leaves of lettuce, or even served alone, and nicely dressed, make a dish for an epicure. Even the much despised cold potato makes a salad that is a favorite with many people. Bear in mind, however, that attractive serving is the main thing in made-over dishes. If, for instance, the lettuce is laid neatly on the plate, then a ring of the beets, then a centre of beans, the study in color alone will please. Its very appearance will add to its value, and perhaps tempt the jaded appetite of a man who needs the food but has hardly the energy to eat it. If the quantities are not sufficiently large to put on a platter, they may be divided up and served on individual plates, which can be placed at each cover before the meal begins.

"But what can I do with my left-over stewed tomatoes?" cries Regina. "I cannot make a salad of *those*."

No, not a salad, but a soup; or, if placed in a

pan, using a layer of tomatoes and a layer of bread-crumbs, alternately, finishing with crumbs and dropping bits of butter over the top, you have a delicious scallop after it has been browned in the oven. Or your tomatoes may be combined with boiled rice or macaroni which is itself a left-over from another day, and you have a new dish without extra cost. Possibly, too, you may have enough tomatoes for a small jar. If such be the case, put it away for the winter. Many a pint-can will be found useful to help out with some other left-over. One experienced housekeeper canned all of her tomatoes in this way. Each day that she had them for dinner in summer, she would prepare enough for a jar or two over. These she would can before seasoning the quantity she needed for dinner; she declared that by this means she was never tired by the strain of "putting them up," but she always had plenty of them when winter came.

Scalloping, by the way, is one of the housekeeper's standbys and greatest economies. There is no way of preparing left-overs that gives a greater amount of satisfaction for the amount of trouble involved.

People grow tired of "hash," so why use that

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method of disposing of odds and ends of meat when scalloping is so much nicer and no more trouble? Not that a good hash is to be despised by any means, but very few people understand the art of hash-making. The result, most times, is anything but appetizing, but scalloping cannot well go wrong. And so many things can be scalloped—meat, potatoes, turnips, eggplant, cauliflower, etc.

Individual scallop dishes are a great convenience, because very often a small quantity can be made up into three or four individual scallops, when it would only waste the material to put it in a larger receptacle. Failing these, the housekeeper can obtain from any fish dealer a dozen of his large clam-shells which can be used for baking dishes exactly as if they were china, serving again and again.

Mashed potatoes put into scallop dishes, moistened with a little butter, and browned in the oven, are not only good, but attractive, especially if each one is served with a tiny sprig of parsley stuck up in it. They also make a variety, and variety and attractiveness form almost as great a part of good housekeeping as does good cooking.

In this connection, let us take up the question of left-overs of meat. A roast of beef, veal, or lamb is very nice cut cold for one meal, but appearing a second time, the cold meat loses its attractiveness and *Pater Familias* feels very little stimulus to his appetite. Consequently the man of the house, who needs the meat and generally deserves to have it presented in attractive form, eats but little and leaves the inner man unsatisfied. Nor is the body properly nourished.

But why have *cold* meat for two or three times when there are so many other ways of serving it acceptably, making practically a new dish of it? Mutton or lamb, for instance, which is so good hot or cold, as a "devil" is just as good and has the added merit of being entirely disguised. The word "disguised" is used advisedly, for these two meats lend themselves the least to successful cooking-over. There are many people to whom mutton hash is a trial, who like "deviled mutton" very much. To devil mutton it should be cut into small slices or cubes of about one inch. It should be put into a skillet with a generous piece of butter and just enough water to let it simmer for about ten minutes. Then make a thickened milk sauce, seasoned with pepper, salt

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and mustard, being careful not to get too much mustard. Pour into the skillet and stir well. When it has cooked up once, the dish is done. Before sending to the table, cover with hard-boiled eggs either chopped fine, or cut in thin slices; garnish with parsley.

But even if adopting this idea, it would be well to make a still further variety by allowing a day to intervene before serving the same kind of meat again. The roast of Sunday, for instance, is very acceptable cold on Monday, but let some other kind of meat intervene on Tuesday, making the pie or the mince or the "devil" or the hash serve for Wednesday. There is just as much economy in this arrangement, but more variety.

Now for the serving of the cold meats.

Have you never seen the cold joint from yesterday placed upon the table again to-day just as it left the table last? A leg of lamb with its poor bare shin sticking out pathetically for five or six inches? A roast of beef with a bared rib or two, proclaiming the ravages of yesterday? A dismembered chicken, ragged and hacked? What could be more unattractive!

Properly served, the cold meat should be carefully and neatly sliced. The size of the pieces,

although it is well to cut them as broad as possible, is not of as much importance as the *neatness* with which they are cut. Ragged edges and unseemly bits of fat should be avoided. By that, it is not meant that no fat should appear, for by many tastes "a streak of fat and a streak of lean" is much appreciated. After it has been sliced, it should be neatly arranged upon a flat platter and garnished. If the meat be one where there is cold filling left, as in fowl or veal, the filling should be placed in a dainty pile in the centre with the slices placed evenly around it.

Various condiments may be served with cold meats and each meat seems to have its own accompaniment in the gastronomic world. Cold roast beef or ham requires mustard, horseradish or pickles, either sweet or sour; lamb needs mint sauce or some tart jelly like currant; for fowl or veal or pork, apple sauce or cranberry jelly is in order. These accompaniments are all served with the meals when hot, as well; but when cold they seem an absolute necessity, to have the meat at its best. As a garnishing, celery tops are very effective if parsley is not to be had.

After the slices are taken off there will remain an unsightly combination of bits and bones.

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This can be converted into the most delicious soup, known to many people as "skeleton soup." This is the case only with roast meats; the bones left from boiled meats will not answer. In the process of roasting, the bones absorb some of the very best essence the meat has to give out. In the case of fowl, the bits of filling and left-over dressing, add to the richness, which is drawn out of the bones when boiled up for soup.

One of the most economical dishes is calf's heart, stuffed and steamed. A rich filling as for fowls should be made, and after the sinewy portions have been removed, the heart should be stuffed and fastened together at the top so as to prevent the filling from falling out in the process of cooking. Muffin-rings should be placed in the pot so as to keep the heart from sticking and about three or four inches of water be put in. The whole should then be placed where it will simmer or boil gently. Every half hour the heart should be basted with the water in the pot, which in a little while has become rich from the butter of the filling and the juices of the meat. It should cook from two and a half to four hours, simmering the while, never boiling hard, and being basted every twenty minutes or half hour.

It is well to buy at least three of these hearts even for a small family as they are generally sold in that way and are an inexpensive meat. They may be made to do duty in four different ways: hot the first day, cold the second (when cold they taste exactly like guinea-hen which is considered quite a delicacy), then deviled; and lastly the water in which they have been simmered makes a most delicious soup having all the flavor of chicken-soup, but more delicate and much richer. The meat is close-grained and fine in texture, keeping well, so that the simmer, and the cold slices, and the deviled heart need not follow each other in immediate succession.

Stewed chicken may be served hot, then cold, then the scraps may be converted into chicken salad, while the left-over gravy may have water added to it and be made into a delicate soup. All white meats can be made into salads, but red meats do not lend themselves to that form of treatment. It is an accepted fact that many professional chefs put into their chicken salad not only veal but pork. Lean roast pork or veal makes a fine meat salad.

A little ham and a little dried beef may be cut fine and cooked with the broken egg or the egg

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that was already soft-boiled ; a little milk and butter added will make a delicious dish of these scraps. Served upon hot toast, they will be quite appetizing as a lunch dish, and entirely fit to place before the guest who "happens in" when the larder is low. Small squares of bread, dipped in egg and milk, or even milk alone, fried an even delicate brown, and served with a spoonful of jelly on top of each piece, will add an economical, quickly-prepared dessert to this impromptu meal.

Many different things may be combined and utilized in many different ways by the woman who understands the art, whereas another woman would find it impossible to use them and they would go to waste. So it behooves every housekeeper who wishes to live economically to study the problem of utilizing "left-overs."

"I will be with you in fifteen minutes. Can I have some lunch?" telephoned a son to his mother. She assented recklessly and then started to take stock of supplies. As she was leaving the city she had not marketed. One good sized tomato, some stale slices of bread, and a pint of milk were all she found ; and only fifteen minutes in which to prepare the lunch ! A rather stiff

